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[35727 A]

(54) Title: SEED TRAIT GENES

(57) Abstract: Recombinant polynucleotides and methods for modifying the phenotype of a plant are provided. In particular, the phenotype that is being modified is a plant's seed characteristics.

SEED TRAIT GENES

RELATED APPLICATION INFORMATION

The present invention claims the benefit from US Provisional Patent Application Serial Nos. 60/166,228 filed November 17, 1999 and 60/197,899 filed April 17, 2000 and "Plant Trait Modification III" filed August 22, 2000.

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

This invention relates to the field of plant biology. More particularly, the present invention pertains to compositions and methods for phenotypically modifying a plant.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Transcription factors can modulate gene expression, either increasing or decreasing (inducing or repressing) the rate of transcription. This modulation results in differential levels of gene expression at various developmental stages, in different tissues and cell types, and in response to different exogenous (e.g., environmental) and endogenous stimuli throughout the life cycle of the organism.

Because transcription factors are key controlling elements of biological pathways, altering the expression levels of one or more transcription factors can change entire biological pathways in an organism. For example, manipulation of the levels of selected transcription factors may result in increased expression of economically useful proteins or metabolic chemicals in plants or to improve other agriculturally relevant characteristics. Conversely, blocked or reduced expression of a transcription factor may reduce biosynthesis of unwanted compounds or remove an undesirable trait. Therefore, manipulating transcription factor levels in a plant offers tremendous potential in agricultural biotechnology for modifying a plant's traits.

The present invention provides novel transcription factors useful for modifying a plant's phenotype in desirable ways, such as modifying the characteristics of a plant's seed.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

In a first aspect, the invention relates to a recombinant polynucleotide comprising a nucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of: (a) a nucleotide sequence encoding a polypeptide comprising a sequence selected from SEQ ID Nos. 2N, where N=1-27, or a complementary nucleotide sequence thereof; (b) a nucleotide sequence encoding a polypeptide comprising a conservatively substituted variant of a polypeptide of (a); (c) a nucleotide sequence comprising a sequence selected from those of SEQ ID Nos. 2N-1, where N=1-27, or a

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complementary nucleotide sequence thereof; (d) a nucleotide sequence comprising silent substitutions in a nucleotide sequence of (c); (e) a nucleotide sequence which hybridizes under stringent conditions over substantially the entire length of a nucleotide sequence of one or more of: (a), (b), (c), or (d); (f) a nucleotide sequence comprising at least 15 consecutive nucleotides of a sequence of any of (a)-(e); (g) a nucleotide sequence comprising a subsequence or fragment of any of (a)-(f), which subsequence or fragment encodes a polypeptide having a biological activity that modifies a plant's seed characteristics; (h) a nucleotide sequence having at least 31% sequence identity to a nucleotide sequence of any of (a)-(g); (i) a nucleotide sequence having at least 60% identity sequence identity to a nucleotide sequence of any of (a)-(g); (j) a nucleotide sequence which encodes a polypeptide having at least 31% identity sequence identity to a polypeptide of SEQ ID Nos. 2N, where N=1-27; (k) a nucleotide sequence which encodes a polypeptide having at least 60% identity sequence identity to a polypeptide of SEO ID Nos. 2N. where N=1-27; and (l) a nucleotide sequence which encodes a conserved domain of a polypeptide having at least 65% sequence identity to a conserved domain of a polypeptide of SEQ ID Nos. 2N, where N=1-27. The recombinant polynucleotide may further comprise a constitutive. inducible, or tissue-active promoter operably linked to the nucleotide sequence. The invention also relates to compositions comprising at least two of the above described polynucleotides.

In a second aspect, the invention is an isolated or recombinant polypeptide comprising a subsequence of at least about 15 contiguous amino acids encoded by the recombinant or isolated polynucleotide described above.

In another aspect, the invention is a transgenic plant comprising one or more of the above described recombinant polynucleotides. In yet another aspect, the invention is a plant with altered expression levels of a polynucleotide described above or a plant with altered expression or activity levels of an above described polypeptide. Further, the invention may be a plant lacking a nucleotide sequence encoding a polypeptide described above. The plant may be a soybean, wheat, corn, potato, cotton, rice, oilseed rape, sunflower, alfalfa, sugarcane, turf, banana, blackberry, blueberry, strawberry, raspberry, cantaloupe, carrot, cauliflower, coffee, cucumber, eggplant, grapes, honeydew, lettuce, mango, melon, onion, papaya, peas, peppers, pineapple, spinach, squash, sweet corn, tobacco, tomato, watermelon, rosaceous fruits, or vegetable brassicas plant.

In a further aspect, the invention relates to a cloning or expression vector comprising the isolated or recombinant polynucleotide described above or cells comprising the cloning or expression vector.

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In yet a further aspect, the invention relates to a composition produced by incubating a polynucleotide of the invention with a nuclease, a restriction enzyme, a polymerase; a polymerase and a primer; a cloning vector, or with a cell.

Furthermore, the invention relates to a method for producing a plant having improved seed traits. The method comprises altering the expression of an isolated or recombinant polynucleotide of the invention or altering the expression or activity of a polypeptide of the invention in a plant to produce a modified plant, and selecting the modified plant for modified seed traits.

In another aspect, the invention relates to a method of identifying a factor that is modulated by or interacts with a polypeptide encoded by a polynucleotide of the invention. The method comprises expressing a polypeptide encoded by the polynucleotide in a plant; and identifying at least one factor that is modulated by or interacts with the polypeptide. In one embodiment the method for identifying modulating or interacting factors is by detecting binding by the polypeptide to a promoter sequence, or by detecting interactions between an additional protein and the polypeptide in a yeast two hybrid system, or by detecting expression of a factor by hybridization to a microarray, subtractive hybridization or differential display.

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In yet another aspect, the invention is a method of identifying a molecule that modulates activity or expression of a polynucleotide or polypeptide of interest. The method comprises placing the molecule in contact with a plant comprising the polynucleotide or polypeptide encoded by the polynucleotide of the invention and monitoring one or more of the expression level of the polynucleotide in the plant, the expression level of the polypeptide in the plant, and modulation of an activity of the polypeptide in the plant.

In yet another aspect, the invention relates to an integrated system, computer or computer readable medium comprising one or more character strings corresponding to a polynucleotide of the invention, or to a polypeptide encoded by the polynucleotide. The integrated system, computer or computer readable medium may comprise a link between one or more sequence strings to a modified plant seed trait.

In yet another aspect, the invention is a method for identifying a sequence similar or homologous to one or more polynucleotides of the invention, or one or more polypeptides encoded by the polynucleotides. The method comprises providing a sequence database; and, querying the sequence database with one or more target sequences corresponding to the one or more polynucleotides or to the one or more polypeptides to identify one or more sequence members of the database that display sequence similarity or homology to one or more of the one or more target sequences.

The method may further comprise of linking the one or more of the polynucleotides of the invention, or encoded polypeptides, to a modified plant seed characteristics phenotype.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Figure 1 provides a table of exemplary polynucleotide and polypeptide sequences of the invention. The table includes from left to right for each sequence: the SEQ ID No., the internal code reference number (GID), whether the sequence is a polynucleotide or polypeptide sequence, and identification of any conserved domains for the polypeptide sequences.

Figure 2 provides a table of exemplary sequences that are homologous to other sequences provided in the Sequence Listing and that are derived from *Arabidopsis thaliana*. The table includes from left to right: the SEQ ID No., the internal code reference number (GID), identification of the homologous sequence, whether the sequence is a polynucleotide or polypeptide sequence, and identification of any conserved domains for the polypeptide sequences.

Figure 3 provides a table of exemplary sequences that are homologous to the sequences provided in Figures 1 and 2 and that are derived from plants other than *Arabidopsis thaliana*. The table includes from left to right: the SEQ ID No., the internal code reference number (GID), the unique GenBank sequence ID No. (NID), the probability that the comparison was generated by chance (P-value), and the species from which the homologous gene was identified.

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DETAILED DESCRIPTION

The present invention relates to polynucleotides and polypeptides, e.g. for modifying phenotypes of plants.

In particular, the polynucleotides or polypeptides are useful for modifying traits associated with a plant's seed characteristics when the expression levels of the polynucleotides or expression levels or activity levels of the polypeptides are altered. Specifically, the polynucleotides and polypeptides are useful for modifying the nutritional content or composition of seeds: such as to modify the protein or oil content of seeds, to modify insoluble sugar content or composition, such as by altering the levels of arabinose, fucose, galactose, mannose, rhamnose or xylose or the like; modify prenyl lipid content or composition, such as by altering the levels of lutein, beta-carotene, xanthophyll-1, xanthophyll-2, chlorophylls A or B, or alpha-, delta- or gamma-tocopherol or the like; modify fatty acid content or composition, such as by altering the levels of the fatty acids 16:0 (palmitic acid), 16:1 (palmitoleic acid), 18:0 (stearic acid), 18:1

(oleic acid), 18:2 (linoleic acid), 20:0, 18:3 (linolenic acid), 20:1 (eicosenoic acid), 20:2 and 22:1 (erucic acid); modify wax composition or content, such as by altering the levels of C29, C31, or C33 alkanes; modify sterol composition or content, such as by altering the levels of brassicasterol, campesterol, stigmasterol, sitosterol or stigmastanol or the like, or modify glucosinolate composition or content.

Other seed characteristics that may be modified include traits relating to a seed's germination characteristics; shelf-life; drydown characteristics; size; stress responses, such as to heat, cold, salt or osmotic shock; other nutritional content, such as vitamins, minerals, or flavonoids; seedling vigor; pest resistance, or seed coat quality, resistance to pathogens, germination rate, resistance to heavy metals and toxins. Yet another desirable phenotype is a change in the overall gene expression pattern of the seed.

The polynucleotides of the invention encode plant transcription factors. The plant transcription factors are derived, e.g., from Arabidopsis thaliana and can belong, e.g., to one or more of the following transcription factor families: the AP2 (APETALA2) domain transcription factor family (Riechmann and Meyerowitz (1998) J. Biol. Chem. 379:633-646); the MYB transcription factor family (Martin and Paz-Ares (1997) Trends Genet. 13:67-73); the MADS domain transcription factor family (Riechmann and Meyerowitz (1997) J. Biol. Chem. 378:1079-1101); the WRKY protein family (Ishiguro and Nakamura (1994) Mol. Gen. Genet. 244:563-571); the ankyrin-repeat protein family (Zhang et al. (1992) Plant Cell 4:1575-1588); the miscellaneous protein (MISC) family (Kim et al. (1997) Plant J. 11:1237-1251); the zinc finger protein (Z) family (Klug and Schwabe (1995) FASEB J. 9: 597-604); the homeobox (HB) protein family (Duboule (1994) Guidebook to the Homeobox Genes, Oxford University Press); the CAAT-element binding proteins (Forsburg and Guarente (1989) Genes Dev. 3:1166-1178); the squamosa promoter binding proteins (SPB) (Klein et al. (1996) Mol. Gen. Genet. 1996 250:7-16); the NAM protein family; the IAA/AUX proteins (Rouse et al. (1998) Science 279:1371-1373); the HLH/MYC protein family (Littlewood et al. (1994) Prot. Profile 1:639-709); the DNAbinding protein (DBP) family (Tucker et al. (1994) EMBO J. 13:2994-3002); the bZIP family of transcription factors (Foster et al. (1994) FASEB J. 8:192-200); the BPF-1 protein (Box Pbinding factor) family (da Costa e Silva et al. (1993) Plant J. 4:125-135); and the golden protein (GLD) family (Hall et al. (1998) Plant Cell 10:925-936).

In addition to methods for modifying a plant phenotype by employing one or more polynucleotides and polypeptides of the invention described herein, the polynucleotides and polypeptides of the invention have a variety of additional uses. These uses include their use in the recombinant production (i.e, expression) of proteins; as regulators of plant gene expression,

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as diagnostic probes for the presence of complementary or partially complementary nucleic acids (including for detection of natural coding nucleic acids); as substrates for further reactions, e.g., mutation reactions, PCR reactions, or the like, of as substrates for cloning e.g., including digestion or ligation reactions, and for identifying exogenous or endogenous modulators of the transcription factors.

DEFINITIONS

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A "polynucleotide" is a nucleic acid sequence comprising a plurality of polymerized nucleotide residues, e.g., at least about 15 consecutive polymerized nucleotide residues, optionally at least about 30 consecutive nucleotides, at least about 50 consecutive nucleotides. In many instances, a polynucleotide comprises a nucleotide sequence encoding a polypeptide (or protein) or a domain or fragment thereof. Additionally, the polynucleotide may comprise a promoter, an intron, an enhancer region, a polyadenylation site, a translation initiation site, 5' or 3' untranslated regions, a reporter gene, a selectable marker, or the like. The polynucleotide can be single stranded or double stranded DNA or RNA. The polynucleotide optionally comprises modified bases or a modified backbone. The polynucleotide can be, e.g., genomic DNA or RNA, a transcript (such as an mRNA), a cDNA, a PCR product, a cloned DNA, a synthetic DNA or RNA, or the like. The polynucleotide can comprise a sequence in either sense or antisense orientations.

A "recombinant polynucleotide" is a polynucleotide that is not in its native state, e.g., the polynucleotide comprises a nucleotide sequence not found in nature, or the polynucleotide is in a context other than that in which it is naturally found, e.g., separated from nucleotide sequences with which it typically is in proximity in nature, or adjacent (or contiguous with) nucleotide sequences with which it typically is not in proximity. For example, the sequence at issue can be cloned into a vector, or otherwise recombined with one or more additional nucleic acid.

An "isolated polynucleotide" is a polynucleotide whether naturally occurring or recombinant, that is present outside the cell in which it is typically found in nature, whether purified or not. Optionally, an isolated polynucleotide is subject to one or more enrichment or purification procedures, e.g., cell lysis, extraction, centrifugation, precipitation, or the like.

A "recombinant polypeptide" is a polypeptide produced by translation of a recombinant polynucleotide. An "isolated polypeptide," whether a naturally occurring or a recombinant polypeptide, is more enriched in (or out of) a cell than the polypeptide in its natural state in a wild type cell, e.g., more than about 5% enriched, more than about 10% enriched, or

more than about 20%, or more than about 50%, or more, enriched, i.e., alternatively denoted: 105%, 110%, 120%, 150% or more, enriched relative to wild type standardized at 100%. Such an enrichment is not the result of a natural response of a wild type plant. Alternatively, or additionally, the isolated polypeptide is separated from other cellular components with which it is typically associated, e.g., by any of the various protein purification methods herein.

The term "transgenic plant" refers to a plant that contains genetic material, not found in a wild type plant of the same species, variety or cultivar. The genetic material may include a transgene, an insertional mutagenesis event (such as by transposon or T-DNA insertional mutagenesis), an activation tagging sequence, a mutated sequence, a homologous recombination event or a sequence modified by chimeraplasty. Typically, the foreign genetic material has been introduced into the plant by human manipulation.

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A transgenic plant may contain an expression vector or cassette. The expression cassette typically comprises a polypeptide-encoding sequence operably linked (i.e., under regulatory control of) to appropriate inducible or constitutive regulatory sequences that allow for the expression of polypeptide. The expression cassette can be introduced into a plant by transformation or by breeding after transformation of a parent plant. A plant refers to a whole plant as well as to a plant part, such as seed, fruit, leaf, or root, plant tissue, plant cells or any other plant material, e.g., a plant explant, as well as to progeny thereof, and to *in vitro* systems that mimic biochemical or cellular components or processes in a cell.

The phrase "ectopically expression or altered expression" in reference to a polynucleotide indicates that the pattern of expression in, e.g., a transgenic plant or plant tissue, is different from the expression pattern in a wild type plant or a reference plant of the same species. For example, the polynucleotide or polypeptide is expressed in a cell or tissue type other than a cell or tissue type in which the sequence is expressed in the wild type plant, or by expression at a time other than at the time the sequence is expressed in the wild type plant, or by a response to different inducible agents, such as hormones or environmental signals, or at different expression levels (either higher or lower) compared with those found in a wild type plant. The term also refers to altered expression patterns that are produced by lowering the levels of expression to below the detection level or completely abolishing expression. The resulting expression pattern can be transient or stable, constitutive or inducible. In reference to a polypeptide, the term "ectopic expression or altered expression" further may relate to altered activity levels resulting from the interactions of the polypeptides with exogenous or endogenous modulators or from interactions with factors or as a result of the chemical modification of the polypeptides.

The term "fragment" or "domain," with respect to a polypeptide, refers to a subsequence of the polypeptide. In some cases, the fragment or domain, is a subsequence of the polypeptide which performs at least one biological function of the intact polypeptide in substantially the same manner, or to a similar extent, as does the intact polypeptide. For example, a polypeptide fragment can comprise a recognizable structural motif or functional domain such as a DNA binding domain that binds to a DNA promoter region, an activation domain or a domain for protein-protein interactions. Fragments can vary in size from as few as 6 amino acids to the full length of the intact polypeptide, but are preferably at least about 30 amino acids in length and more preferably at least about 60 amino acids in length. In reference to a nucleotide sequence, "a fragment" refers to any subsequence of a polynucleotide, typically, of at least consecutive about 15 nucleotides, preferably at least about 30 nucleotides, more preferably at least about 50, of any of the sequences provided herein.

The term "trait" refers to a physiological, morphological, biochemical or physical characteristic of a plant or particular plant material or cell. In some instances, this characteristic is visible to the human eye, such as seed or plant size, or can be measured by available biochemical techniques, such as the protein, starch or oil content of seed or leaves or by the observation of the expression level of genes, e.g., by employing Northern analysis, RT-PCR, microarray gene expression assays or reporter gene expression systems, or by agricultural observations such as stress tolerance, yield or pathogen tolerance.

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"Trait modification" refers to a detectable difference in a characteristic in a plant ectopically expressing a polynucleotide or polypeptide of the present invention relative to a plant not doing so, such as a wild type plant. In some cases, the trait modification can be evaluated quantitatively. For example, the trait modification can entail at least about a 2% increase or decrease in an observed trait (difference), at least a 5% difference, at least about a 10% difference, at least about a 20% difference, at least about a 30%, at least about a 50%, at least about a 70%, or at least about a 100%, or an even greater difference. It is known that there can be a natural variation in the modified trait. Therefore, the trait modification observed entails a change of the normal distribution of the trait in the plants compared with the distribution observed in wild type plant.

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Trait modifications of particular interest include those to seed (such as embryo or endosperm), fruit, root, flower, leaf, stem, shoot, seedling or the like, including: enhanced tolerance to environmental conditions including freezing, chilling, heat, drought, water saturation, radiation and ozone; improved tolerance to microbial, fungal or viral diseases; improved tolerance to pest infestations, including nematodes, mollicutes, parasitic higher plants or the like;

decreased herbicide sensitivity; improved tolerance of heavy metals or enhanced ability to take up heavy metals: improved growth under poor photoconditions (e.g., low light and/or short day length), or changes in expression levels of genes of interest. Other phenotype that can be modified relate to the production of plant metabolites, such as variations in the production of taxol, tocopherol, tocotrienol, sterols, phytosterols, vitamins, wax monomers, anti-oxidants, amino acids, lignins, cellulose, tannins, prenyllipids (such as chlorophylls and carotenoids), glucosinolates, and terpenoids, enhanced or compositionally altered protein or oil production (especially in seeds), or modified sugar (insoluble or soluble) and/or starch composition. Physical plant characteristics that can be modified include cell development (such as the number of trichomes), fruit and seed size and number, yields of plant parts such as stems, leaves and roots, the stability of the seeds during storage, characteristics of the seed pod (e.g., susceptibility to shattering), root hair length and quantity, internode distances, or the quality of seed coat. Plant growth characteristics that can be modified include growth rate, germination rate of seeds, vigor of plants and seedlings, leaf and flower senescence, male sterility, apomixis, flowering time, flower abscission, rate of nitrogen uptake, biomass or transpiration characteristics, as well as plant architecture characteristics such as apical dominance, branching patterns, number of organs, organ identity, organ shape or size.

POLYPEPTIDES AND POLYNUCLEOTIDES OF THE INVENTION

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The present invention provides, among other things, transcription factors (TFs), and transcription factor homologue polypeptides, and isolated or recombinant polynucleotides encoding the polypeptides. These polypeptides and polynucleotides may be employed to modify a plant's seed characteristics.

Exemplary polynucleotides encoding the polypeptides of the invention were identified in the *Arabidopsis thaliana* GenBank database using publicly available sequence analysis programs and parameters. Sequences initially identified were then further characterized to identify sequences comprising specified sequence strings corresponding to sequence motifs present in families of known transcription factors. Polynucleotide sequences meeting such criteria were confirmed as transcription factors.

Additional polynucleotides of the invention were identified by screening Arabidopsis thaliana and/or other plant cDNA libraries with probes corresponding to known transcription factors under low stringency hybridization conditions. Additional sequences, including full length coding sequences were subsequently recovered by the rapid amplification of cDNA ends (RACE) procedure, using a commercially available kit according to the

manufacturer's instructions. Where necessary, multiple rounds of RACE are performed to isolate 5' and 3' ends. The full length cDNA was then recovered by a routine end-to-end polymerase chain reaction (PCR) using primers specific to the isolated 5' and 3' ends. Exemplary sequences are provided in the Sequence Listing.

The polynucleotides of the invention were ectopically expressed in overexpressor or knockout plants and changes in the seed characteristics of the plants were observed.

Therefore, the polynucleotides and polypeptides can be employed to improve the seed characteristics of plants.

Making polynucleotides

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The polynucleotides of the invention include sequences that encode transcription factors and transcription factor homologue polypeptides and sequences complementary thereto, as well as unique fragments of coding sequence, or sequence complementary thereto. Such polynucleotides can be, e.g., DNA or RNA, e.g., mRNA, cRNA, synthetic RNA, genomic DNA, cDNA synthetic DNA, oligonucleotides, etc. The polynucleotides are either double-stranded or single-stranded, and include either, or both sense (i.e., coding) sequences and antisense (i.e., non-coding, complementary) sequences. The polynucleotides include the coding sequence of a transcription factor, or transcription factor homologue polypeptide, in isolation, in combination with additional coding sequences (e.g., a purification tag, a localization signal, as a fusion-protein, as a pre-protein, or the like), in combination with non-coding sequences (e.g., introns or inteins, regulatory elements such as promoters, enhancers, terminators, and the like), and/or in a vector or host environment in which the polynucleotide encoding a transcription factor or transcription factor homologue polypeptide is an endogenous or exogenous gene.

A variety of methods exist for producing the polynucleotides of the invention. Procedures for identifying and isolating DNA clones are well known to those of skill in the art, and are described in, e.g., Berger and Kimmel, <u>Guide to Molecular Cloning Techniques</u>, <u>Methods in Enzymology</u> volume 152 Academic Press, Inc., San Diego, CA ("Berger"); Sambrook et al., <u>Molecular Cloning - A Laboratory Manual</u> (2nd Ed.), Vol. 1-3, Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory, Cold Spring Harbor, New York, 1989 ("Sambrook") and <u>Current Protocols in Molecular Biology</u>, F.M. Ausubel et al., eds., Current Protocols, a joint venture between Greene Publishing Associates, Inc. and John Wiley & Sons, Inc., (supplemented through 2000) ("Ausubel").

Alternatively, polynucleotides of the invention, can be produced by a variety of in vitro amplification methods adapted to the present invention by appropriate selection of specific or degenerate primers. Examples of protocols sufficient to direct persons of skill through in vitro amplification methods, including the polymerase chain reaction (PCR) the ligase chain

reaction (LCR), Qbeta-replicase amplification and other RNA polymerase mediated techniques (e.g., NASBA), e.g., for the production of the homologous nucleic acids of the invention are found in Berger, Sambrook, and Ausubel, as well as Mullis et al., (1987) PCR Protocols A Guide to Methods and Applications (Innis et al. eds) Academic Press Inc. San Diego, CA (1990) (Innis). Improved methods for cloning in vitro amplified nucleic acids are described in Wallace et al., U.S. Pat. No. 5,426,039. Improved methods for amplifying large nucleic acids by PCR are summarized in Cheng et al. (1994) Nature 369: 684-685 and the references cited therein, in which PCR amplicons of up to 40kb are generated. One of skill will appreciate that essentially any RNA can be converted into a double stranded DNA suitable for restriction digestion, PCR expansion and sequencing using reverse transcriptase and a polymerase. See, e.g., Ausubel, Sambrook and Berger, all supra.

Alternatively, polynucleotides and oligonucleotides of the invention can be assembled from fragments produced by solid-phase synthesis methods. Typically, fragments of up to approximately 100 bases are individually synthesized and then enzymatically or chemically ligated to produce a desired sequence, e.g., a polynucletotide encoding all or part of a transcription factor. For example, chemical synthesis using the phosphoramidite method is described, e.g., by Beaucage et al. (1981) <u>Tetrahedron Letters</u> 22:1859-69; and Matthes et al. (1984) <u>EMBO J.</u> 3:801-5. According to such methods, oligonucleotides are synthesized, purified, annealed to their complementary strand, ligated and then optionally cloned into suitable vectors. And if so desired, the polynucleotides and polypeptides of the invention can be custom ordered from any of a number of commercial suppliers.

HOMOLOGOUS SEQUENCES

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Sequences homologous, i.e., that sharc significant sequence identity or similarity, to those provided in the Sequence Listing, derived from Arabidopsis thaliana or from other plants of choice are also an aspect of the invention. Homologous sequences can be derived from any plant including monocots and dicots and in particular agriculturally important plant species, including but not limited to, crops such as soybean, wheat, corn, potato, cotton, rice, oilseed rape (including canola), sunflower, alfalfa, sugarcane and turf; or fruits and vegetables, such as banana, blackberry, blueberry, strawberry, and raspberry, cantaloupe, carrot, cauliflower, coffee, cucumber, eggplant, grapes, honeydew, lettuce, mango, melon, onion, papaya, peas, peppers, pineapple, spinach, squash, sweet corn, tobacco, tomato, watermelon, rosaceous fruits (such as apple, peach, pear, cherry and plum) and vegetable brassicas (such as broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, brussel sprouts and kohlrabi). Other crops, fruits and vegetables whose phenotype

can be changed include barley, rye, millet, sorghum, currant, avocado, citrus fruits such as oranges, lemons, grapefruit and tangerines, artichoke, cherries, nuts such as the walnut and peanut, endive, leek, roots, such as arrowroot, beet, cassava, turnip, radish, yam, and sweet potato, and beans. The homologous sequences may also be derived from woody species, such pine, poplar and eucalyptus.

Transcription factors that are homologous to the listed sequences will typically share at least about 31% amino acid sequence identity. More closely related transcription factors can share at least about 50%, about 60%, about 65%, about 70%, about 75% or about 80% or about 90% or about 95% or about 98% or more sequence identity with the listed sequences. Factors that are most closely related to the listed sequences share, e.g., at least about 85%, about 90% or about 95% or more % sequence identity to the listed sequences. At the nucleotide level, the sequences will typically share at least about 40% nucleotide sequence identity, preferably at least about 50%, about 60%, about 70% or about 80% sequence identity, and more preferably about 85%, about 90%, about 95% or about 97% or more sequence identity to one or more of the listed sequences. The degeneracy of the genetic code enables major variations in the nucleotide sequence of a polynucleotide while maintaining the amino acid sequence of the encoded protein. Conserved domains within a transcription factor family may exhibit a higher degree of sequence homology, such as at least 65% sequence identity including conservative substitutions, and preferably at least 80% sequence identity.

Identifying Nucleic Acids by Hybridization

Polynucleotides homologous to the sequences illustrated in the Sequence Listing can be identified, e.g., by hybridization to each other under stringent or under highly stringent conditions. Single stranded polynucleotides hybridize when they associate based on a variety of well characterized physico-chemical forces, such as hydrogen bonding, solvent exclusion, base stacking and the like. The stringency of a hybridization reflects the degree of sequence identity of the nucleic acids involved, such that the higher the stringency, the more similar are the two polynucleotide strands. Stringency is influenced by a variety of factors, including temperature, salt concentration and composition, organic and non-organic additives, solvents, etc. present in both the hybridization and wash solutions and incubations (and number), as described in more detail in the references cited above.

An example of stringent hybridization conditions for hybridization of complementary nucleic acids which have more than 100 complementary residues on a filter in a Southern or northern blot is about 5°C to 20°C lower than the thermal melting point (Tm) for the specific sequence at a defined ionic strength and pH. The T_m is the temperature (under defined

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ionic strength and pH) at which 50% of the target sequence hybridizes to a perfectly matched probe. Nucleic acid molecules that hybridize under stringent conditions will typically hybridize to a probe based on either the entire cDNA or selected portions, e.g., to a unique subsequence, of the cDNA under wash conditions of 0.2x SSC to 2.0 x SSC, 0.1% SDS at 50-65° C, for example 0.2 x SSC, 0.1% SDS at 65° C. For identification of less closely related homologues washes can be performed at a lower temperature, e.g., 50° C. In general, stringency is increased by raising the wash temperature and/or decreasing the concentration of SSC.

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As another example, stringent conditions can be selected such that an oligonucleotide that is perfectly complementary to the coding oligonucleotide hybridizes to the coding oligonucleotide with at least about a 5-10x higher signal to noise ratio than the ratio for hybridization of the perfectly complementary oligonucleotide to a nucleic acid encoding a transcription factor known as of the filing date of the application. Conditions can be selected such that a higher signal to noise ratio is observed in the particular assay which is used, e.g., about 15x, 25x, 35x, 50x or more. Accordingly, the subject nucleic acid hybridizes to the unique coding oligonucleotide with at least a 2x higher signal to noise ratio as compared to hybridization of the coding oligonucleotide to a nucleic acid encoding known polypeptide. Again, higher signal to noise ratios can be selected, e.g., about 5x, 10x, 25x, 35x, 50x or more. The particular signal will depend on the label used in the relevant assay, e.g., a fluorescent label, a colorimetric label, a radio active label, or the like.

Alternatively, transcription factor homologue polypeptides can be obtained by screening an expression library using antibodies specific for one or more transcription factors. With the provision herein of the disclosed transcription factor, and transcription factor homologue nucleic acid sequences, the encoded polypeptide(s) can be expressed and purified in a heterologous expression system (e.g., *E. coli*) and used to raise antibodies (monoclonal or polyclonal) specific for the polypeptide(s) in question. Antibodies can also be raised against synthetic peptides derived from transcription factor, or transcription factor homologue, amino acid sequences. Methods of raising antibodies are well known in the art and are described in Harlow and Lane (1988) Antibodies: A Laboratory Manual, Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory, New York. Such antibodies can then be used to screen an expression library produced from the plant from which it is desired to clone additional transcription factor homologues, using the methods described above. The selected cDNAs can be confirmed by sequencing and enzymatic activity.

SEQUENCE VARIATIONS

It will readily be appreciated by those of skill in the art, that any of a variety of polynucleotide sequences are capable of encoding the transcription factors and transcription factor homologue polypeptides of the invention. Due to the degeneracy of the genetic code, many different polynucleotides can encode identical and/or substantially similar polypeptides in addition to those sequences illustrated in the Sequence Listing.

For example, Table 1 illustrates, e.g., that the codons AGC, AGT, TCA, TCC, TCG, and TCT all encode the same amino acid: serine. Accordingly, at each position in the sequence where there is a codon encoding serine, any of the above trinucleotide sequences can be used without altering the encoded polypeptide.

Table 1

Amino acids	*		Codon					
Alanine	Ala	 A	GCA	GCC	GCG	GCU		
			1		aca	dCU		
Cysteine	Cys	C.	TGC	TGT	•			
Aspartic acid	Asp	D	GAC	GAT	•	,		
Glutamic acid	Glu	E	GAA	GAG				
Phenylalanine	Phe	F	TTC	TTT				-
Glycine	Gly	G	GGA	GGC	GGG	GGT		
Histidine	His	H	CAC	CAT				
Isoleucine	Ile	I	ATA	ATC	ATT			
Lysine	Lys	K	AAA .	AAG				
Leucine	Leu	L	TTA	TTG	CTA	CTC	CTG	CTT
Methionine	Met	M	ATG					
Asparagine	Asn	N	AAC	AAT				
Proline	Pro	Ρ.	CCA	CCC	CCG	CCT	•	
Glutamine	Gln	Q	CAA	CAG				
Arginine	Arg	R	AGA	AGG	CGA	CGC	CGG	CGT
Serine	Ser	S	AGC	AGT	TCA	TCC	TCG	TCT
Threonine	Thr	T	ACA	ACC	ACG	ACT		
Valine	Val	V	GTA	GTC	GTG	GTT		
Tryptophan	Trp	W	TGG					
Tyrosine	Tyr	Y	TAC	TAT				

Sequence alterations that do not change the amino acid sequence encoded by the polynucleotide are termed "silent" variations. With the exception of the codons ATG and TGG, encoding methionine and tryptophan, respectively, any of the possible codons for the same amino acid can be substituted by a variety of techniques, e.g., site-directed mutagenesis, available in the art. Accordingly, any and all such variations of a sequence selected from the above table are a feature of the invention.

In addition to silent variations, other conservative variations that alter one, or a few amino acids in the encoded polypeptide, can be made without altering the function of the polypeptide, these conservative variants are, likewise, a feature of the invention.

For example, substitutions, deletions and insertions introduced into the sequences provided in the Sequence Listing are also envisioned by the invention. Such sequence modifications can be engineered into a sequence by site-directed mutagenesis (Wu (ed.) Meth. Enzymol. (1993) vol. 217, Academic Press) or the other methods noted below. Amino acid substitutions are typically of single residues; insertions usually will be on the order of about from 1 to 10 amino acid residues; and deletions will range about from 1 to 30 residues. In preferred embodiments, deletions or insertions are made in adjacent pairs, e.g., a deletion of two residues or insertion of two residues. Substitutions, deletions, insertions or any combination thereof can be combined to arrive at a sequence. The mutations that are made in the polynucleotide encoding the transcription factor should not place the sequence out of reading frame and should not create complementary regions that could produce secondary mRNA structure. Preferably, the polypeptide encoded by the DNA performs the desired function.

Conservative substitutions are those in which at least one residue in the amino acid sequence has been removed and a different residue inserted in its place. Such substitutions generally are made in accordance with the Table 2 when it is desired to maintain the activity of the protein. Table 2 shows amino acids which can be substituted for an amino acid in a protein and which are typically regarded as conservative substitutions.

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Table 2

Residue	Conservative Substitutions
Ala	Ser
Arg	Lys
Asn	Gln; His
Asp	Glu
Gln	Asn
Cys	Ser
Glu	Asp
Gly	Pro
His.	Asn; Gln
Ile	Leu, Val
Leu	Ile; Val
Lys	Arg; Gln
Met	Leu; Ile
Phe	Met; Leu; Tyr
Ser	Thr; Gly
Thr	Ser;Val
Trp	Тут
Tyr .	Trp; Phe
Val	Ile; Leu

Substitutions that are less conservative than those in Table 2 can be selected by picking residues that differ more significantly in their effect on maintaining (a) the structure of the polypeptide backbone in the area of the substitution, for example, as a sheet or helical conformation, (b) the charge or hydrophobicity of the molecule at the target site, or (c) the bulk of the side chain. The substitutions which in general are expected to produce the greatest changes in protein properties will be those in which (a) a hydrophilic residue, e.g., seryl or throonyl, is substituted for (or by) a hydrophobic residue, e.g., leucyl, isoleucyl, phenylalanyl, valyl or alanyl; (b) a cysteine or proline is substituted for (or by) any other residue; (c) a residue having an electropositive side chain, e.g., lysyl, arginyl, or histidyl, is substituted for (or by) an electronegative residue, e.g., glutamyl or aspartyl; or (d) a residue having a bulky side chain, e.g., phenylalanine, is substituted for (or by) one not having a side chain, e.g., glycine.

FURTHER MODIFYING SEQUENCES OF THE INVENTION—MUTATION/ FORCED EVOLUTION

In addition to generating silent or conservative substitutions as noted, above, the present invention optionally includes methods of modifying the sequences of the Sequence Listing. In the methods, nucleic acid or protein modification methods are used to alter the given sequences to produce new sequences and/or to chemically or enzymatically modify given sequences to change the properties of the nucleic acids or proteins.

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Thus, in one embodiment, given nucleic acid sequences are modified, e.g., according to standard mutagenesis or artificial evolution methods to produce modified sequences. For example, Ausubel, *supra*, provides additional details on mutagenesis methods. Artificial forced evolution methods are described, e.g., by Stemmer (1994) Nature 370:389-391, and Stemmer (1994) Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA 91:10747-10751. Many other mutation and evolution methods are also available and expected to be within the skill of the practitioner.

Similarly, chemical or enzymatic alteration of expressed nucleic acids and polypeptides can be performed by standard methods. For example, sequence can be modified by addition of lipids, sugars, peptides, organic or inorganic compounds, by the inclusion of modified nucleotides or amino acids, or the like. For example, protein modification techniques are illustrated in Ausubel, *supra*. Further details on chemical and enzymatic modifications can be found herein. These modification methods can be used to modify any given sequence, or to modify any sequence produced by the various mutation and artificial evolution modification methods noted herein.

Accordingly, the invention provides for modification of any given nucleic acid by mutation, evolution, chemical or enzymatic modification, or other available methods, as well as for the products produced by practicing such methods, e.g., using the sequences herein as a starting substrate for the various modification approaches.

For example, optimized coding sequence containing codons preferred by a particular prokaryotic or eukaryotic host can be used e.g., to increase the rate of translation or to produce recombinant RNA transcripts having desirable properties, such as a longer half-life, as compared with transcripts produced using a non-optimized sequence. Translation stop codons can also be modified to reflect host preference. For example, preferred stop codons for S. cerevisiae and mammals are TAA and TGA, respectively. The preferred stop codon for monocotyledonous plants is TGA, whereas insects and E. coli prefer to use TAA as the stop codon.

The polynucleotide sequences of the present invention can also be engineered in order to alter a coding sequence for a variety of reasons, including but not limited to, alterations which modify the sequence to facilitate cloning, processing and/or expression of the gene product. For example, alterations are optionally introduced using techniques which are well known in the art, e.g., site-directed mutagenesis, to insert new restriction sites, to alter glycosylation patterns, to change codon preference, to introduce splice sites, etc.

Furthermore, a fragment or domain derived from any of the polypeptides of the invention can be combined with domains derived from other transcription factors or synthetic domains to modify the biological activity of a transcription factor. For instance, a DNA binding domain derived from a transcription factor of the invention can be combined with the activation domain of another transcription factor or with a synthetic activation domain. A transcription activation domain assists in initiating transcription from a DNA binding site. Examples include the transcription activation region of VP16 or GAL4 (Moore et al. (1998) Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA 95: 376-381; and Aoyama et al. (1995) Plant Cell 7:1773-1785), peptides derived from bacterial sequences (Ma and Ptashne (1987) Cell 51; 113-119) and synthetic peptides (Giniger and Ptashne, (1987) Nature 330:670-672).

EXPRESSION AND MODIFICATION OF POLYPEPTIDES

Typically, polynucleotide sequences of the invention are incorporated into recombinant DNA (or RNA) molecules that direct expression of polypeptides of the invention in appropriate host cells, transgenic plants, in vitro translation systems, or the like. Due to the inherent degeneracy of the genetic code, nucleic acid sequences which encode substantially the same or a functionally equivalent amino acid sequence can be substituted for any listed sequence to provide for cloning and expressing the relevant homologue.

Vectors, Promoters and Expression Systems

The present invention includes recombinant constructs comprising one or more of the nucleic acid sequences herein. The constructs typically comprise a vector, such as a plasmid, a cosmid, a phage, a virus (e.g., a plant virus), a bacterial artificial chromosome (BAC), a yeast artificial chromosome (YAC), or the like, into which a nucleic acid sequence of the invention has been inserted, in a forward or reverse orientation. In a preferred aspect of this embodiment, the construct further comprises regulatory sequences, including, for example, a promoter, operably linked to the sequence. Large numbers of suitable vectors and promoters are known to those of skill in the art, and are commercially available.

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General texts which describe molecular biological techniques useful herein, including the use and production of vectors, promoters and many other relevant topics, include Berger, Sambrook and Ausubel, *supra*. Any of the identified sequences can be incorporated into a cassette or vector, e.g., for expression in plants. A number of expression vectors suitable for stable transformation of plant cells or for the establishment of transgenic plants have been described including those described in Weissbach and Weissbach, (1989) Methods for Plant Molecular Biology, Academic Press, and Gelvin et al., (1990) Plant Molecular Biology Manual, Kluwer Academic Publishers. Specific examples include those derived from a Ti plasmid of *Agrobacterium tumefaciens*, as well as those disclosed by Herrera-Estrella et al. (1983) Nature 303: 209, Bevan (1984) Nucl Acid Res. 12: 8711-8721, Klee (1985) Bio/Technology 3: 637-642, for dicotyledonous plants.

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Alternatively, non-Ti vectors can be used to transfer the DNA into monocotyledonous plants and cells by using free DNA delivery techniques. Such methods can involve, for example, the use of liposomes, electroporation, microprojectile bombardment, silicon carbide whiskers, and viruses. By using these methods transgenic plants such as wheat, rice (Christou (1991) Bio/Technology 9: 957-962) and corn (Gordon-Kamm (1990) Plant Cell 2: 603-618) can be produced. An immature embryo can also be a good target tissue for monocots for direct DNA delivery techniques by using the particle gun (Weeks et al. (1993) Plant Physiol 102: 1077-1084; Vasil (1993) Bio/Technology 10: 667-674; Wan and Lemeaux (1994) Plant Physiol 104: 37-48, and for Agrobacterium-mediated DNA transfer (Ishida et al. (1996) Nature Biotech 14: 745-750).

Typically, plant transformation vectors include one or more cloned plant coding sequence (genomic or cDNA) under the transcriptional control of 5' and 3' regulatory sequences and a dominant selectable marker. Such plant transformation vectors typically also contain a promoter (e.g., a regulatory region controlling inducible or constitutive, environmentally-or developmentally-regulated, or cell- or tissue-specific expression), a transcription initiation start site, an RNA processing signal (such as intron splice sites), a transcription termination site, and/or a polyadenylation signal.

Examples of constitutive plant promoters which can be useful for expressing the TF sequence include: the cauliflower mosaic virus (CaMV) 35S promoter, which confers constitutive, high-level expression in most plant tissues (see, e.g., Odel et al. (1985) Nature 313:810); the nopaline synthase promoter (An et al. (1988) Plant Physiol 88:547); and the octopine synthase promoter (Fromm et al. (1989) Plant Cell 1: 977).

A variety of plant gene promoters that regulate gene expression in response to environmental, hormonal, chemical, developmental signals, and in a tissue-active manner can be used for expression of a TF sequence in plants. Choice of a promoter is based largely on the phenotype of interest and is determined by such factors as tissue (e.g., seed, fruit, root, pollen, vascular tissue, flower, carpel, etc.), inducibility (e.g., in response to wounding, heat, cold, drought, light, pathogens, etc.), timing, developmental stage, and the like. Numerous known promoters have been characterized and can favorable be employed to promote expression of a polynucleotide of the invention in a transgenic plant or cell of interest. For example, tissue specific promoters include: seed-specific promoters (such as the napin, phaseolin or DC3 promoter described in US Pat. No. 5,773,697), fruit-specific promoters that are active during fruit ripening (such as the dru 1 promoter (US Pat. No. 5,783,393), or the 2A11 promoter (US Pat. No. 4,943,674) and the tomato polygalacturonase promoter (Bird et al. (1988) Plant Mol Biol 11:651), root-specific promoters, such as those disclosed in US Patent Nos. 5,618,988, 5,837,848 and 5,905,186, pollen-active promoters such as PTA29, PTA26 and PTA13 (US Pat. No. 5,792,929), promoters active in vascular tissue (Ringli and Keller (1998) Plant Mol Biol 37:977-988), flowerspecific (Kaiser et al, (1995) Plant Mol Biol 28:231-243), pollen (Baerson et al. (1994) Plant Mol Biol 26:1947-1959), carpels (Ohl et al. (1990) Plant Cell 2:837-848), pollen and ovules (Baerson et al. (1993) Plant Mol Biol 22:255-267), auxin-inducible promoters (such as that described in van der Kop et al. (1999) Plant Mol Biol 39:979-990 or Baumann et al. (1999) Plant Cell 11:323-334), cytokinin-inducible promoter (Guevara-Garcia (1998) Plant Mol Biol 38:743-753), promoters responsive to gibberellin (Shi et al. (1998) Plant Mol Biol 38:1053-1060, Willmott et al. (1998) 38:817-825) and the like. Additional promoters are those that elicit expression in response to heat (Ainley et al. (1993) Plant Mol Biol 22: 13-23), light (e.g., the pea rbcS-3A promoter, Kuhlemeier et al. (1989) Plant Cell 1:471, and the maize rbcS promoter, Schaffner and Sheen (1991) Plant Cell 3: 997); wounding (e.g., wunl, Siebertz et al. (1989) Plant Cell 1: 961); pathogens (such as the PR-1 promoter described in Buchel et al. (1999) Plant Mol. Biol. 40:387-396, and the PDF1.2 promoter described in Manners et al. (1998) Plant Mol. Biol. 38:1071-80), and chemicals such as methyl jasmonate or salicylic acid (Gatz et al. (1997) Plant Mol Biol 48: 89-108). In addition, the timing of the expression can be controlled by using promoters such as those acting at senescence (An and Amazon (1995) Science 270: 1986-1988); or late seed development (Odell et al. (1994) Plant Physiol 106:447-458).

Plant expression vectors can also include RNA processing signals that can be positioned within, upstream or downstream of the coding sequence. In addition, the expression vectors can include additional regulatory sequences from the 3'-untranslated region of plant

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genes, e.g., a 3' terminator region to increase mRNA stability of the mRNA, such as the PI-II terminator region of potato or the octopine or nopaline synthase 3' terminator regions.

Additional Expression Elements

Specific initiation signals can aid in efficient translation of coding sequences. These signals can include, e.g., the ATG initiation codon and adjacent sequences. In cases where a coding sequence, its initiation codon and upstream sequences are inserted into the appropriate expression vector, no additional translational control signals may be needed. However, in cases where only coding sequence (e.g., a mature protein coding sequence), or a portion thereof, is inserted, exogenous transcriptional control signals including the ATG initiation codon can be separately provided. The initiation codon is provided in the correct reading frame to facilitate transcription. Exogenous transcriptional elements and initiation codons can be of various origins, both natural and synthetic. The efficiency of expression can be enhanced by the inclusion of enhancers appropriate to the cell system in use.

Expression Hosts

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The present invention also relates to host cells which are transduced with vectors of the invention, and the production of polypeptides of the invention (including fragments thereof) by recombinant techniques. Host cells are genetically engineered (i.e, nucleic acids are introduced, e.g., transduced, transformed or transfected) with the vectors of this invention, which may be, for example, a cloning vector or an expression vector comprising the relevant nucleic acids herein. The vector is optionally a plasmid, a viral particle, a phage, a naked nucleic acids, etc. The engineered host cells can be cultured in conventional nutrient media modified as appropriate for activating promoters, selecting transformants, or amplifying the relevant gene. The culture conditions, such as temperature, pH and the like, are those previously used with the host cell selected for expression, and will be apparent to those skilled in the art and in the references cited herein, including, Sambrook and Ausubel.

The host cell can be a eukaryotic cell, such as a yeast cell, or a plant cell, or the host cell can be a prokaryotic cell, such as a bacterial cell. Plant protoplasts are also suitable for some applications. For example, the DNA fragments are introduced into plant tissues, cultured plant cells or plant protoplasts by standard methods including electroporation (Fromm et al., (1985) Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA 82, 5824, infection by viral vectors such as cauliflower mosaic virus (CaMV) (Hohn et al., (1982) Molecular Biology of Plant Tumors, (Academic Press, New York) pp. 549-560; US 4,407,956), high velocity ballistic penetration by small particles with the nucleic acid either within the matrix of small beads or particles, or on the surface (Klein et al., (1987) Nature 327, 70-73), use of pollen as vector (WO 85/01856), or use of Agrobacterium

tumefaciens or A. rhizogenes carrying a T-DNA plasmid in which DNA fragments are cloned. The T-DNA plasmid is transmitted to plant cells upon infection by Agrobacterium tumefaciens, and a portion is stably integrated into the plant genome (Horsch et al. (1984) Science 233:496-498; Fraley et al. (1983) Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA 80, 4803).

The cell can include a nucleic acid of the invention which encodes a polypeptide, wherein the cells expresses a polypeptide of the invention. The cell can also include vector sequences, or the like. Furthermore, cells and transgenic plants which include any polypeptide or nucleic acid above or throughout this specification, e.g., produced by transduction of a vector of the invention, are an additional feature of the invention.

For long-term, high-yield production of recombinant proteins, stable expression can be used. Host cells transformed with a nucleotide sequence encoding a polypeptide of the invention are optionally cultured under conditions suitable for the expression and recovery of the encoded protein from cell culture. The protein or fragment thereof produced by a recombinant cell may be secreted, membrane-bound, or contained intracellularly, depending on the sequence and/or the vector used. As will be understood by those of skill in the art, expression vectors containing polynucleotides encoding mature proteins of the invention can be designed with signal sequences which direct secretion of the mature polypeptides through a prokaryotic or eukaryotic cell membrane.

Modified Amino Acids

Polypeptides of the invention may contain one or more modified amino acids. The presence of modified amino acids may be advantageous in, for example, increasing polypeptide half-life, reducing polypeptide antigenicity or toxicity, increasing polypeptide storage stability, or the like. Amino acid(s) are modified, for example, co-translationally or post-translationally during recombinant production or modified by synthetic or chemical means.

Non-limiting examples of a modified amino acid include incorporation or other use of acetylated amino acids, glycosylated amino acids, sulfated amino acids, prenylated (e.g., farnesylated, geranylgeranylated) amino acids, PEG modified (e.g., "PEGylated") amino acids, biotinylated amino acids, carboxylated amino acids, phosphorylated amino acids, etc. References adequate to guide one of skill in the modification of amino acids are replete throughout the literature.

IDENTIFICATION OF ADDITIONAL FACTORS

A transcription factor provided by the present invention can also be used to identify additional endogenous or exogenous molecules that can affect a phentoype or trait of

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interest. On the one hand, such molecules include organic (small or large molecules) and/or inorganic compounds that affect expression of (i.e., regulate) a particular transcription factor. Alternatively, such molecules include endogenous molecules that are acted upon either at a transcriptional level by a transcription factor of the invention to modify a phenotype as desired. For example, the transcription factors can be employed to identify one or more downstream gene with which is subject to a regulatory effect of the transcription factor. In one approach, a transcription factor or transcription factor homologue of the invention is expressed in a host cell, e.g, a transgenic plant cell, tissue or explant, and expression products, either RNA or protein, of likely or random targets are monitored, e.g., by hybridization to a microarray of nucleic acid probes corresponding to genes expressed in a tissue or cell type of interest, by two-dimensional gel electrophoresis of protein products, or by any other method known in the art for assessing expression of gene products at the level of RNA or protein. Alternatively, a transcription factor of the invention can be used to identify promoter sequences (i.e., binding sites) involved in the regulation of a downstream target. After identifying a promoter sequence, interactions between the transcription factor and the promoter sequence can be modified by changing specific nucleotides in the promoter sequence or specific amino acids in the transcription factor that interact with the promoter sequence to alter a plant trait. Typically, transcription factor DNA binding sites are identified by gel shift assays. After identifying the promoter regions, the promoter region sequences can be employed in double-stranded DNA arrays to identify molecules that affect the interactions of the transcription factors with their promoters (Bulyk et al. (1999) Nature Biotechnology 17:573-577).

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The identified transcription factors are also useful to identify proteins that modify the activity of the transcription factor. Such modification can occur by covalent modification, such as by phosphorylation, or by protein-protein (homo or-heteropolymer) interactions. Any method suitable for detecting protein-protein interactions can be employed. Among the methods that can be employed are co-immunoprecipitation, cross-linking and co-purification through gradients or chromatographic columns, and the two-hybrid yeast system.

The two-hybrid system detects protein interactions in vivo and is described in Chien, et al., (1991), Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA 88, 9578-9582 and is commercially available from Clontech (Palo Alto, Calif.). In such a system, plasmids are constructed that encode two hybrid proteins: one consists of the DNA-binding domain of a transcription activator protein fused to the TF polypeptide and the other consists of the transcription activator protein's activation domain fused to an unknown protein that is encoded by a cDNA that has been recombined into the plasmid as part of a cDNA library. The DNA-binding domain fusion plasmid

and the cDNA library are transformed into a strain of the yeast Saccharomyces cerevisiae that contains a reporter gene (e.g., lacZ) whose regulatory region contains the transcription activator's binding site. Either hybrid protein alone cannot activate transcription of the reporter gene. Interaction of the two hybrid proteins reconstitutes the functional activator protein and results in expression of the reporter gene, which is detected by an assay for the reporter gene product. Then, the library plasmids responsible for reporter gene expression are isolated and sequenced to identify the proteins encoded by the library plasmids. After identifying proteins that interact with the transcription factors, assays for compounds that interfere with the TF protein-protein interactions can be preformed.

10 IDENTIFICATION OF MODULATORS

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In addition to the intracellular molecules described above, extracellular molecules that alter activity or expression of a transcription factor, either directly or indirectly, can be identified. For example, the methods can entail first placing a candidate molecule in contact with a plant or plant cell. The molecule can be introduced by topical administration, such as spraying or soaking of a plant, and then the molecule's effect on the expression or activity of the TF polypeptide or the expression of the polynucleotide monitored. Changes in the expression of the TF polypeptide can be monitored by use of polyclonal or monoclonal antibodies, gel electrophoresis or the like. Changes in the expression of the corresponding polynucleotide sequence can be detected by use of microarrays, Northerns, quantitative PCR, or any other technique for monitoring changes in mRNA expression. These techniques are exemplified in Ausubel et al. (eds) <u>Current Protocols in Molecular Biology</u>, John Wiley & Sons (1998). Such changes in the expression levels can be correlated with modified plant traits and thus identified molecules can be useful for soaking or spraying on fruit, vegetable and grain crops to modify traits in plants.

Essentially any available composition can be tested for modulatory activity of expression or activity of any nucleic acid or polypeptide herein. Thus, available libraries of compounds such as chemicals, polypeptides, nucleic acids and the like can be tested for modulatory activity. Often, potential modulator compounds can be dissolved in aqueous or organic (e.g., DMSO-based) solutions for easy delivery to the cell or plant of interest in which the activity of the modulator is to be tested. Optionally, the assays are designed to screen large modulator composition libraries by automating the assay steps and providing compounds from any convenient source to assays, which are typically run in parallel (e.g., in microtiter formats on microtiter plates in robotic assays).

In one embodiment, high throughput screening methods involve providing a combinatorial library containing a large number of potential compounds (potential modulator compounds). Such "combinatorial chemical libraries" are then screened in one or more assays, as described herein, to identify those library members (particular chemical species or subclasses) that display a desired characteristic activity. The compounds thus identified can serve as target compounds.

A combinatorial chemical library can be, e.g., a collection of diverse chemical compounds generated by chemical synthesis or biological synthesis. For example, a combinatorial chemical library such as a polypeptide library is formed by combining a set of chemical building blocks (e.g., in one example, amino acids) in every possible way for a given compound length (i.e., the number of amino acids in a polypeptide compound of a set length). Exemplary libraries include peptide libraries, nucleic acid libraries, antibody libraries (see, e.g., Vaughn et al. (1996) Nature Biotechnology, 14(3):309-314 and PCT/US96/10287), carbohydrate libraries (see, e.g., Liang et al. Science (1996) 274:1520-1522 and U.S. Patent 5,593,853), peptide nucleic acid libraries (see, e.g., U.S. Patent 5,539,083), and small organic molecule libraries (see, e.g., benzodiazepines, Baum C&EN Jan 18, page 33 (1993); isoprenoids, U.S. Patent 5,569,588; thiazolidinones and metathiazanones, U.S. Patent 5,549,974; pyrrolidines, U.S. Patents 5,525,735 and 5,519,134; morpholino compounds, U.S. Patent 5,506,337) and the like.

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Preparation and screening of combinatorial or other libraries is well known to those of skill in the art. Such combinatorial chemical libraries include, but are not limited to, peptide libraries (see, e.g., U.S. Patent 5,010,175, Furka, <u>Int. J. Pept. Prot. Res.</u> 37:487-493 (1991) and Houghton et al. <u>Nature</u> 354:84-88 (1991)). Other chemistries for generating chemical diversity libraries can also be used.

In addition, as noted, compound screening equipment for high-throughput screening is generally available, e.g., using any of a number of well known robotic systems that have also been developed for solution phase chemistries useful in assay systems. These systems include automated workstations including an automated synthesis apparatus and robotic systems utilizing robotic arms. Any of the above devices are suitable for use with the present invention, e.g., for high-throughput screening of potential modulators. The nature and implementation of modifications to these devices (if any) so that they can operate as discussed herein will be apparent to persons skilled in the relevant art.

Indeed, entire high throughput screening systems are commercially available.

These systems typically automate entire procedures including all sample and reagent pipetting, liquid dispensing, timed incubations, and final readings of the microplate in detector(s)

appropriate for the assay. These configurable systems provide high throughput and rapid start up as well as a high degree of flexibility and customization. Similarly, microfluidic implementations of screening are also commercially available.

The manufacturers of such systems provide detailed protocols the various high throughput. Thus, for example, Zymark Corp. provides technical bulletins describing screening systems for detecting the modulation of gene transcription, ligand binding, and the like. The integrated systems herein, in addition to providing for sequence alignment and, optionally, synthesis of relevant nucleic acids, can include such screening apparatus to identify modulators that have an effect on one or more polynucleotides or polypeptides according to the present invention.

In some assays it is desirable to have positive controls to ensure that the components of the assays are working properly. At least two types of positive controls are appropriate. That is, known transcriptional activators or inhibitors can be incubated with cells/plants/ etc. in one sample of the assay, and the resulting increase/decrease in transcription can be detected by measuring the resulting increase in RNA/ protein expression, etc., according to the methods herein. It will be appreciated that modulators can also be combined with transcriptional activators or inhibitors to find modulators which inhibit transcriptional activation or transcriptional repression. Either expression of the nucleic acids and proteins herein or any additional nucleic acids or proteins activated by the nucleic acids or proteins herein, or both, can be monitored.

In an embodiment, the invention provides a method for identifying compositions that modulate the activity or expression of a polynucleotide or polypeptide of the invention. For example, a test compound, whether a small or large molecule, is placed in contact with a cell, plant (or plant tissue or explant), or composition comprising the polynucleotide or polypeptide of interest and a resulting effect on the cell, plant, (or tissue or explant) or composition is evaluated by monitoring, either directly or indirectly, one or more of: expression level of the polynucleotide or polypeptide, activity (or modulation of the activity) of the polynucleotide or polypeptide. In some cases, an alteration in a plant phenotype can be detected following contact of a plant (or plant cell, or tissue or explant) with the putative modulator, e.g., by modulation of expression or activity of a polynucleotide or polypeptide of the invention.

SUBSEQUENCES

Also contemplated are uses of polynucleotides, also referred to herein as oligonucleotides, typically having at least 12 bases, preferably at least 15, more preferably at least

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20, 30, or 50 bases, which hybridize under at least highly stringent (or ultra-high stringent or ultra-ultra- high stringent conditions) conditions to a polynucleotide sequence described above. The polynucleotides may be used as probes, primers, sense and antisense agents, and the like, according to methods as noted *supra*.

Subsequences of the polynucleotides of the invention, including polynucleotide fragments and oligonucleotides are useful as nucleic acid probes and primers. An oligonucleotide suitable for use as a probe or primer is at least about 15 nucleotides in length, more often at least about 18 nucleotides, often at least about 21 nucleotides, frequently at least about 30 nucleotides, or about 40 nucleotides, or more in length. A nucleic acid probe is useful in hybridization protocols, e.g., to identify additional polypeptide homologues of the invention, including protocols for microarray experiments. Primers can be annealed to a complementary target DNA strand by nucleic acid hybridization to form a hybrid between the primer and the target DNA strand, and then extended along the target DNA strand by a DNA polymerase enzyme. Primer pairs can be used for amplification of a nucleic acid sequence, e.g., by the polymerase chain reaction (PCR) or other nucleic-acid amplification methods. See Sambrook and Ausubel, supra.

In addition, the invention includes an isolated or recombinant polypeptide including a subsequence of at least about 15 contiguous amino acids encoded by the recombinant or isolated polynucleotides of the invention. For example, such polypeptides, or domains or fragments thereof, can be used as immunogens, e.g., to produce antibodies specific for the polypeptide sequence, or as probes for detecting a sequence of interest. A subsequence can range in size from about 15 amino acids in length up to and including the full length of the polypeptide.

PRODUCTION OF TRANSGENIC PLANTS

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Modification of Traits

The polynucleotides of the invention are favorably employed to produce transgenic plants with various traits, or characteristics, that have been modified in a desirable manner, e.g., to improve the seed characteristics of a plant. For example, alteration of expression levels or patterns (e.g., spatial or temporal expression patterns) of one or more of the transcription factors (or transcription factor homologues) of the invention, as compared with the levels of the same protein found in a wild type plant, can be used to modify a plant's traits. An illustrative example of trait modification, improved seed characteristics, by altering expression levels of a particular transcription factor is described further in the Examples and the Sequence Listing.

Antisense and Cosuppression Approaches

In addition to expression of the nucleic acids of the invention as gene replacement or plant phenotype modification nucleic acids, the nucleic acids are also useful for sense and anti-sense suppression of expression, e.g., to down-regulate expression of a nucleic acid of the invention, e.g., as a further mechanism for modulating plant phenotype. That is, the nucleic acids of the invention, or subsequences or anti-sense sequences thereof, can be used to block expression of naturally occurring homologous nucleic acids. A variety of sense and anti-sense technologies are known in the art, e.g., as set forth in Lichtenstein and Nellen (1997)

Antisense Technology: A Practical Approach IRL Press at Oxford University, Oxford, England. In general, sense or anti-sense sequences are introduced into a cell, where they are optionally amplified, e.g., by transcription. Such sequences include both simple oligonucleotide sequences and catalytic sequences such as ribozymes.

For example, a reduction or elimination of expression (i.e., a "knock-out") of a transcription factor or transcription factor homologue polypeptide in a transgenic plant, e.g., to modify a plant trait, can be obtained by introducing an antisense construct corresponding to the polypeptide of interest as a cDNA. For antisense suppression, the transcription factor or homologue cDNA is arranged in reverse orientation (with respect to the coding sequence) relative to the promoter sequence in the expression vector. The introduced sequence need not be the full length cDNA or gene, and need not be identical to the cDNA or gene found in the plant type to be transformed. Typically, the antisense sequence need only be capable of hybridizing to the target gene or RNA of interest. Thus, where the introduced sequence is of shorter length, a higher degree of homology to the endogenous transcription factor sequence will be needed for effective antisense suppression. While antisense sequences of various lengths can be utilized, preferably, the introduced antisense sequence in the vector will be at least 30 nucleotides in length, and improved antisense suppression will typically be observed as the length of the antisense sequence increases. Preferably, the length of the antisense sequence in the vector will be greater than 100 nucleotides. Transcription of an antisense construct as described results in the production of RNA molecules that are the reverse complement of mRNA molecules transcribed from the endogenous transcription factor gene in the plant cell.

Suppression of endogenous transcription factor gene expression can also be achieved using a ribozyme. Ribozymes are RNA molecules that possess highly specific endoribonuclease activity. The production and use of ribozymes are disclosed in U.S. Patent No. 4,987,071 and U.S. Patent No. 5,543,508. Synthetic ribozyme sequences including antisense RNAs can be used to confer RNA cleaving activity on the antisense RNA, such that endogenous

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mRNA molecules that hybridize to the antisense RNA are cleaved, which in turn leads to an enhanced antisense inhibition of endogenous gene expression.

Vectors in which RNA encoded by a transcription factor or transcription factor homologue cDNA is over-expressed can also be used to obtain co-suppression of a corresponding endogenous gene, e.g., in the manner described in U.S. Patent No. 5,231,020 to Jorgensen. Such co-suppression (also termed sense suppression) does not require that the entire transcription factor cDNA be introduced into the plant cells, nor does it require that the introduced sequence be exactly identical to the endogenous transcription factor gene of interest. However, as with antisense suppression, the suppressive efficiency will be enhanced as specificity of hybridization is increased, e.g., as the introduced sequence is lengthened, and/or as the sequence similarity between the introduced sequence and the endogenous transcription factor gene is increased.

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Vectors expressing an untranslatable form of the transcription factor mRNA, e.g., sequences comprising one or more stop codon, or nonsense mutation) can also be used to suppress expression of an endogenous transcription factor, thereby reducing or eliminating it's activity and modifying one or more traits. Methods for producing such constructs are described in U.S. Patent-No. 5,583,021. Preferably, such constructs are made by introducing a premature stop codon into the transcription factor gene. Alternatively, a plant trait can be modified by gene silencing using double-strand RNA (Sharp (1999) Genes and Development 13: 139-141).

Another method for abolishing the expression of a gene is by insertion mutagenesis using the T-DNA of *Agrobacterium tumefaciens*. After generating the insertion mutants, the mutants can be screened to identify those containing the insertion in a transcription factor or transcription factor homologue gene. Plants containing a single transgene insertion event at the desired gene can be crossed to generate homozygous plants for the mutation (Koncz et al. (1992) Methods in Arabidopsis Research, World Scientific).

Alternatively, a plant phenotype can be altered by eliminating an endogenous gene, such as a transcription factor or transcription factor homologue, e.g., by homologous recombination (Kempin et al. (1997) Nature 389:802).

A plant trait can also be modified by using the crc-lox system (for example, as described in US Pat. No. 5,658,772). A plant genome can be modified to include first and second lox sites that are then contacted with a Cre recombinase. If the lox sites are in the same orientation, the intervening DNA sequence between the two sites is excised. If the lox sites are in the opposite orientation, the intervening sequence is inverted.

The polynucleotides and polypeptides of this invention can also be expressed in a plant in the absence of an expression cassette by manipulating the activity or expression level of

the endogenous gene by other means. For example, by ectopically expressing a gene by T-DNA activation tagging (Ichikawa et al. (1997) Nature 390 698-701; Kakimoto et al. (1996) Science 274: 982-985). This method entails transforming a plant with a gene tag containing multiple transcriptional enhancers and once the tag has inserted into the genome, expression of a flanking gene coding sequence becomes deregulated. In another example, the transcriptional machinery in a plant can be modified so as to increase transcription levels of a polynucleotide of the invention (See, e.g., PCT Publications WO 96/06166 and WO 98/53057 which describe the modification of the DNA binding specificity of zinc finger proteins by changing particular amino acids in the DNA binding motif).

The transgenic plant can also include the machinery necessary for expressing or altering the activity of a polypeptide encoded by an endogenous gene, for example by altering the phosphorylation state of the polypeptide to maintain it in an activated state.

Transgenic plants (or plant cells, or plant explants, or plant tissues) incorporating the polynucleotides of the invention and/or expressing the polypeptides of the invention can be produced by a variety of well established techniques as described above. Following construction of a vector, most typically an expression cassette, including a polynucleotide, e.g., encoding a transcription factor or transcription factor homologue, of the invention, standard techniques can be used to introduce the polynucleotide into a plant, a plant cell, a plant explant or a plant tissue of interest. Optionally, the plant cell, explant or tissue can be regenerated to produce a transgenic plant.

The plant can be any higher plant, including gymnosperms, monocotyledonous and dicotyledenous plants. Suitable protocols are available for *Leguminosae* (alfalfa, soybean, clover, etc.), *Umbelliferae* (carrot, celery, parsnip), *Cruciferae* (cabbage, radish, rapeseed, broccoli, etc.), *Curcurbitaceae* (melons and cucumber), *Gramineae* (wheat, corn, rice, barley, millet, etc.), *Solanaceae* (potato, tomato, tobacco, peppers, etc.), and various other crops. See protocols described in Ammirato et al. (1984) <u>Handbook of Plant Cell Culture –Crop Species.</u> Macmillan Publ. Co. Shimamoto et al. (1989) <u>Nature</u> 338:274-276; Fromm et al. (1990) <u>Bio/Technology</u> 8:833-839; and Vasil et al. (1990) <u>Bio/Technology</u> 8:429-434.

Transformation and regeneration of both monocotyledonous and dicotyledonous plant cells is now routine, and the selection of the most appropriate transformation technique will be determined by the practitioner. The choice of method will vary with the type of plant to be transformed; those skilled in the art will recognize the suitability of particular methods for given plant types. Suitable methods can include, but are not limited to: electroporation of plant protoplasts; liposome-mediated transformation; polyethylene glycol (PEG) mediated

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transformation; transformation using viruses; micro-injection of plant cells; micro-projectile bombardment of plant cells; vacuum infiltration; and Agrobacterium tumeficiens mediated transformation. Transformation means introducing a nucleotide sequence in a plant in a manner to cause stable or transient expression of the sequence.

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Successful examples of the modification of plant characteristics by transformation with cloned sequences which serve to illustrate the current knowledge in this field of technology, and which are herein incorporated by reference, include: U.S. Patent Nos. 5,571,706; 5,677,175; 5,510,471; 5,750,386; 5,597,945; 5,589,615; 5,750,871; 5,268,526; 5,780,708; 5,538,880; 5,773,269; 5,736,369 and 5,610,042.

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Following transformation, plants are preferably selected using a dominant selectable marker incorporated into the transformation vector. Typically, such a marker will confer antibiotic or herbicide resistance on the transformed plants, and selection of transformants can be accomplished by exposing the plants to appropriate concentrations of the antibiotic or herbicide.

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After transformed plants are selected and grown to maturity, those plants showing a modified trait are identified. The modified trait can be any of those traits described above. Additionally, to confirm that the modified trait is due to changes in expression levels or activity of the polypeptide or polynucleotide of the invention can be determined by analyzing mRNA expression using Northern blots, RT-PCR or microarrays, or protein expression using immunoblots or Western blots or gel shift assays.

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INTEGRATED SYSTEMS—SEQUENCE IDENTITY

Additionally, the present invention may be an integrated system, computer or computer readable medium that comprises an instruction set for determining the identity of one or more sequences in a database. In addition, the instruction set can be used to generate or identify sequences that meet any specified criteria. Furthermore, the instruction set may be used to associate or link certain functional benefits, such improved seed characteristics, with one or more identified sequence.

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For example, the instruction set can include, e.g., a sequence comparison or other alignment program, e.g., an available program such as, for example, the Wisconsin Package Version 10.0, such as BLAST, FASTA, PILEUP, FINDPATTERNS or the like (GCG, Madision, WI). Public sequence databases such as GenBank, EMBL, Swiss-Prot and PIR or private sequence databases such as PhytoSeq (Incyte Pharmaceuticals, Palo Alto, CA) can be searched.

Alignment of sequences for comparison can be conducted by the local homology algorithm of Smith and Waterman (1981) Adv. Appl. Math. 2:482, by the homology alignment algorithm of Needleman and Wunsch (1970) J. Mol. Biol. 48:443, by the search for similarity method of Pearson and Lipman (1988) Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. U.S.A. 85: 2444, by computerized implementations of these algorithms. After alignment, sequence comparisons between two (or more) polynucleotides or polypeptides are typically performed by comparing sequences of the two sequences over a comparison window to identify and compare local regions of sequence similarity. The comparison window can be a segment of at least about 20 contiguous positions, usually about 50 to about 200, more usually about 100 to about 150 contiguous positions. A description of the method is provided in Ausubel et al., supra.

A variety of methods of determining sequence relationships can be used, including manual alignment and computer assisted sequence alignment and analysis. This later approach is a preferred approach in the present invention, due to the increased throughput afforded by computer assisted methods. As noted above, a variety of computer programs for performing sequence alignment are available, or can be produced by one of skill.

One example algorithm that is suitable for determining percent sequence identity and sequence similarity is the BLAST algorithm, which is described in Altschul et al. J. Mol. Biol 215:403-410 (1990). Software for performing BLAST analyses is publicly available, e.g., through the National Center for Biotechnology Information (http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/). This algorithm involves first identifying high scoring sequence pairs (HSPs) by identifying short 20 words of length W in the query sequence, which either match or satisfy some positive-valued threshold score T when aligned with a word of the same length in a database sequence. T is referred to as the neighborhood word score threshold (Altschul et al., supra). These initial neighborhood word hits act as seeds for initiating searches to find longer HSPs containing them. 25 The word hits are then extended in both directions along each sequence for as far as the cumulative alignment score can be increased. Cumulative scores are calculated using, for nucleotide sequences, the parameters M (reward score for a pair of matching residues; always > 0) and N (penalty score for mismatching residues; always < 0). For amino acid sequences, a scoring matrix is used to calculate the cumulative score. Extension of the word hits in each 30 direction are halted when: the cumulative alignment score falls off by the quantity X from its maximum achieved value; the cumulative score goes to zero or below, due to the accumulation of one or more negative-scoring residue alignments; or the end of either sequence is reached. The BLAST algorithm parameters W, T, and X determine the sensitivity and speed of the alignment. The BLASTN program (for nucleotide sequences) uses as defaults a wordlength (W) of 11, an

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expectation (E) of 10, a cutoff of 100, M=5, N=-4, and a comparison of both strands. For amino acid sequences, the BLASTP program uses as defaults a wordlength (W) of 3, an expectation (E) of 10, and the BLOSUM62 scoring matrix (see Henikoff & Henikoff (1989) Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA 89:10915).

In addition to calculating percent sequence identity, the BLAST algorithm also performs a statistical analysis of the similarity between two sequences (see, e.g., Karlin & Altschul (1993) Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA 90:5873-5787). One measure of similarity provided by the BLAST algorithm is the smallest sum probability (P(N)), which provides an indication of the probability by which a match between two nucleotide or amino acid sequences would occur by chance. For example, a nucleic acid is considered similar to a reference sequence (and, therefore, in this context, homologous) if the smallest sum probability in a comparison of the test nucleic acid to the reference nucleic acid is less than about 0.1, or less than about 0.01, and or even less than about 0.001. An additional example of a useful sequence alignment algorithm is PILEUP. PILEUP creates a multiple sequence alignment from a group of related sequences using progressive, pairwise alignments. The program can align, e.g., up to 300 sequences of a maximum length of 5,000 letters.

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The integrated system, or computer typically includes a user input interface allowing a user to selectively view one or more sequence records corresponding to the one or more character strings, as well as an instruction set which aligns the one or more character strings with each other or with an additional character string to identify one or more region of sequence similarity. The system may include a link of one or more character strings with a particular phenotype or gene function. Typically, the system includes a user readable output element which displays an alignment produced by the alignment instruction set.

The methods of this invention can be implemented in a localized or distributed computing environment. In a distributed environment, the methods may implemented on a single computer comprising multiple processors or on a multiplicity of computers. The computers can be linked, e.g. through a common bus, but more preferably the computer(s) are nodes on a network. The network can be a generalized or a dedicated local or wide-area network and, in certain preferred embodiments, the computers may be components of an intra-net or an internet.

Thus, the invention provides methods for identifying a sequence similar or homologous to one or more polynucleotides as noted herein, or one or more target polypeptides encoded by the polynucleotides, or otherwise noted herein and may include linking or associating a given plant phenotype or gene function with a sequence. In the methods, a sequence database is

provided (locally or across an inter or intra net) and a query is made against the sequence database using the relevant sequences herein and associated plant phenotypes or gene functions.

Any sequence herein can be entered into the database, before or after querying the database. This provides for both expansion of the database and, if done before the querying step, for insertion of control sequences into the database. The control sequences can be detected by the query to ensure the general integrity of both the database and the query. As noted, the query can be performed using a web browser based interface. For example, the database can be a centralized public database such as those noted herein, and the querying can be done from a remote terminal or computer across an internet or intranet.

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EXAMPLES

The following examples are intended to illustrate but not limit the present invention.

EXAMPLE I. FULL LENGTH GENE IDENTIFICATION AND CLONING

Putative transcription factor sequences (genomic or ESTs) related to known
transcription factors were identified in the *Arabidopsis thaliana* GenBank database using the
tblastn sequence analysis program using default parameters and a P-value cutoff threshold of -4
or -5 or lower, depending on the length of the query sequence. Putative transcription factor
sequence hits were then screened to identify those containing particular sequence strings. If the
sequence hits contained such sequence strings, the sequences were confirmed as transcription
factors.

Alternatively, Arabidopsis thaliana cDNA libraries derived from different tissues or treatments, or genomic libraries were screened to identify novel members of a transcription family using a low stringency hybridization approach. Probes were synthesized using gene specific primers in a standard PCR reaction (annealing temperature 60°C) and labeled with ³²P dCTP using the High Prime DNA Labeling Kit (Boehringer Mannheim). Purified radiolabelled probes were added to filters immersed in Church hybridization medium (0.5 M NaPO₄ pH 7.0, 7% SDS, 1 % w/v bovine serum albumin) and hybridized overnight at 60 °C with shaking. Filters were washed two times for 45 to 60 minutes with 1xSCC, 1% SDS at 60°C.

To identify additional sequence 5' or 3' of a partial cDNA sequence in a cDNA library, 5' and 3' rapid amplification of cDNA ends (RACE) was performed using the MarathonTM cDNA amplification kit (Clontech, Palo Alto, CA). Generally, the method entailed first isolating poly(A) mRNA, performing first and second strand cDNA synthesis to generate double stranded

cDNA, blunting cDNA ends, followed by ligation of the MarathonTM Adaptor to the cDNA to form a library of adaptor-ligated ds cDNA.

Gene-specific primers were designed to be used along with adaptor specific primers for both 5' and 3' RACE reactions. Nested primers, rather than single primers, were used to increase PCR specificity. Using 5' and 3' RACE reactions, 5' and 3' RACE fragments were obtained, sequenced and cloned. The process can be repeated until 5' and 3' ends of the full-length gene were identified. Then the full-length cDNA was generated by PCR using primers specific to 5' and 3' ends of the gene by end-to-end PCR.

EXAMPLE II. CONSTRUCTION OF EXPRESSION VECTORS

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The sequence was amplified from a genomic or cDNA library using primers specific to sequences upstream and downstream of the coding region. The expression vector was pMEN20 or pMEN65, which are both derived from pMON316 (Sanders et al, (1987) Nucleic Acids Research 15:1543-58) and contain the CaMV 35S promoter to express transgenes. To clone the sequence into the vector, both pMEN20 and the amplified DNA fragment were digested separately with SalI and NotI restriction enzymes at 37° C for 2 hours. The digestion products were subject to electrophoresis in a 0.8% agarose gel and visualized by ethidium bromide staining. The DNA fragments containing the sequence and the linearized plasmid were excised and purified by using a Qiaquick gel extraction kit (Qiagen, CA). The fragments of interest were ligated at a ratio of 3:1 (vector to insert). Ligation reactions using T4 DNA ligase (New England Biolabs, MA) were carried out at 16° C for 16 hours. The ligated DNAs were transformed into competent cells of the *E. coli* strain DH5alpha by using the heat shock method. The transformations were plated on LB plates containing 50 mg/l kanamycin (Sigma).

Individual colonies were grown overnight in five milliliters of LB broth containing 50 mg/l kanamycin at 37° C. Plasmid DNA was purified by using Qiaquick Mini Prep kits (Qiagen, CA).

EXAMPLE III. TRANSFORMATION OF AGROBACTERIUM WITH THE EXPRESSION VECTOR

After the plasmid vector containing the gene was constructed, the vector was used to transform Agrobacterium tumefaciens cells expressing the gene products. The stock of Agrobacterium tumefaciens cells for transformation were made as described by Nagel et al. (1990) FEMS Microbiol Letts. 67: 325-328. Agrobacterium strain ABI was grown in 250 ml LB medium (Sigma) overnight at 28°C with shaking until an absorbance (A₆₀₀) of 0.5 – 1.0 was reached. Cells were harvested by centrifugation at 4,000 x g for 15 min at 4°C. Cells were then

resuspended in 250 μ l chilled buffer (1 mM HEPES, pH adjusted to 7.0 with KOH). Cells were centrifuged again as described above and resuspended in 125 μ l chilled buffer. Cells were then centrifuged and resuspended two more times in the same HEPES buffer as described above at a volume of 100 μ l and 750 μ l, respectively. Resuspended cells were then distributed into 40 μ l aliquots, quickly frozen in liquid nitrogen, and stored at -80° C.

Agrobacterium cells were transformed with plasmids prepared as described above following the protocol described by Nagel et al. For each DNA construct to be transformed, 50 – 100 ng DNA (generally resuspended in 10 mM Tris-HCl, 1 mM EDTA, pH 8.0) was mixed with 40 μl of Agrobacterium cells. The DNA/cell mixture was then transferred to a chilled cuvette with a 2mm electrode gap and subject to a 2.5 kV charge dissipated at 25 μF and 200 μF using a Gene Pulser II apparatus (Bio-Rad). After electroporation, cells were immediately resuspended in 1.0 ml LB and allowed to recover without antibiotic selection for 2 – 4 hours at 28°C in a shaking incubator. After recovery, cells were plated onto selective medium of LB broth containing 100 μg/ml spectinomycin (Sigma) and incubated for 24-48 hours at 28°C. Single colonies were then picked and inoculated in fresh medium. The presence of the plasmid construct was verified by PCR amplification and sequence analysis.

EXAMPLE IV. TRANSFORMATION OF ARABIDOPSIS PLANTS WITH AGROBACTERIUM TUMEFACIENS WITH EXPRESSION VECTOR

After transformation of Agrobacterium tumefaciens with plasmid vectors

containing the gene, single Agrobacterium colonies were identified, propagated, and used to transform Arabidopsis plants. Briefly, 500 ml cultures of LB medium containing 50 mg/l kanamycin were inoculated with the colonies and grown at 28°C with shaking for 2 days until an absorbance (A₆₀₀) of > 2.0 is reached. Cells were then harvested by centrifugation at 4,000 x g for 10 min, and resuspended in infiltration medium (1/2 X Murashige and Skoog salts (Sigma), 1

X Gamborg's B-5 vitamins (Sigma), 5.0% (w/v) sucrose (Sigma), 0.044 μM benzylamino purine (Sigma), 200 μl/L Silwet L-77 (Lehle Seeds) until an absorbance (A₆₀₀) of 0.8 was reached.

Prior to transformation, Arabidopsis thaliana seeds (ecotype Columbia) were sown at a density of ~10 plants per 4" pot onto Pro-Mix BX potting medium (Hummert International) covered with fiberglass mesh (18 mm X 16 mm). Plants were grown under continuous illumination (50-75 μ E/m²/sec) at 22-23° C with 65-70% relative humidity. After about 4 weeks, primary inflorescence stems (bolts) are cut off to encourage growth of multiple secondary bolts. After flowering of the mature secondary bolts, plants were prepared for transformation by removal of all siliques and opened flowers.

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The pots were then immersed upside down in the mixture of Agrobacterium infiltration medium as described above for 30 sec, and placed on their sides to allow draining into a 1' x 2' flat surface covered with plastic wrap. After 24 h, the plastic wrap was removed and pots are turned upright. The immersion procedure was repeated one week later, for a total of two immersions per pot. Seeds were then collected from each transformation pot and analyzed following the protocol described below.

EXAMPLE V. IDENTIFICATION OF ARABIDOPSIS PRIMARY TRANSFORMANTS

Seeds collected from the transformation pots were sterilized essentially as follows. Seeds were dispersed into in a solution containing 0.1% (v/v) Triton X-100 (Sigma) and sterile H₂O and washed by shaking the suspension for 20 min. The wash solution was then drained and replaced with fresh wash solution to wash the seeds for 20 min with shaking. After removal of the second wash solution, a solution containing 0.1% (v/v) Triton X-100 and 70% ethanol (Equistar) was added to the seeds and the suspension was shaken for 5 min. After removal of the ethanol/detergent solution, a solution containing 0.1% (v/v) Triton X-100 and 30% (v/v) bleach (Clorox) was added to the seeds, and the suspension was shaken for 10 min. After removal of the bleach/detergent solution, seeds were then washed five times in sterile distilled H₂O. The seeds were stored in the last wash water at 4°C for 2 days in the dark before being plated onto antibiotic selection medium (1 X Murashige and Skoog salts (pH adjusted to 5.7 with 1M KOH), 1 X Gamborg's B-5 vitamins, 0.9% phytagar (Life Technologies), and 50 mg/l kanamycin). Seeds were germinated under continuous illumination (50-75 μE/m²/sec) at 22-23° C. After 7-10 days of growth under these conditions, kanamycin resistant primary transformants (T₁ generation) were visible and obtained. These seedlings were transferred first to fresh selection plates where the seedlings continued to grow for 3-5 more days, and then to soil (Pro-Mix BX potting medium).

Primary transformants were crossed and progeny seeds (T₂) collected; kanamycin resistant seedlings were selected and analyzed. The expression levels of the recombinant polynucleotides in the transformants varies from about a 5% expression level increase to a least a 100% expression level increase. Similar observations are made with respect to polypeptide level expression.

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EXAMPLE VI. IDENTIFICATION OF ARABIDOPSIS PLANTS WITH TRANSCRIPTION FACTOR GENE KNOCKOUTS

The screening of insertion mutagenized *Arabidopsis* collections for null mutants in a known target gene was essentially as described in Krysan et al (1999) <u>Plant Cell</u> 11:2283-2290. Briefly, gene-specific primers, nested by 5-250 pb to each others, were designed from the 5' and 3' regions of a known target gene. Similarly, nested sets of primers were also created specific to each of the T-DNA or transposon ends (the "right" and "left" borders). All possible combinations of gene specific and T-DNA/transposon primers were used to detect by PCR an insertion event within or close to the target gene. The amplified DNA fragments were then sequenced which allows the precise determination of the T-DNA/transposon insertion point relative to the target gene. Insertion events within the coding or intervening sequence of the genes were deconvoluted from a pool comprising a plurality of insertion events to a single unique mutant plant for functional characterization. The method is described in more detail in Yu and Adam, US Application Serial No. 09/177,733 filed October 23, 1998.

EXAMPLE VII. IDENTIFICATION OF SEED CHARACTERISTICS PHENOTYPE IN OVEREXPRESSOR OR GENE KNOCKOUT PLANTS

Experiments were performed to identify those transformants or knockouts that exhibited an improved seed characteristics. For such studies, the transformants were observed by eye or biochemical assays were performed.

Among the biochemicals that were assayed were insoluble sugars, such as arabinose, fucose, galactose, mannose, rhamnose or xylose or the like; prenyl lipids, such as lutein, beta-carotene, xanthophyll-1, xanthophyll-2, chlorophylls A or B, or alpha-, delta- or gamma-tocopherol or the like; fatty acids, such as 16:0 (palmitic acid), 16:1 (palmitoleic acid), 18:0 (stearic acid), 18:1 (oleic acid), 18:2 (linoleic acid), 20:0, 18:3 (linolenic acid), 20:1 (eicosenoic acid), 20:2, 22:1 (erucic acid) or the like; waxes, such as by altering the levels of C29, C31, or C33 alkanes; sterols, such as brassicasterol, campesterol, stigmasterol, sitosterol or stigmastanol or the like, glucosinolates, protein or oil levels

Fatty acids were measured using two methods depending on whether the tissue was from leaves or seeds. For leaves, lipids were extracted and esterified with hot methanolic H2SO4 and partitioned into hexane from methanolic brine. For seed fatty acids, seeds were pulverized and extracted in methanol:heptane:toluene:2,2-dimethoxypropane:H2SO4 (39:34:20:5:2) for 90 minutes at 80°C. After cooling to room temperature the upper phase, containing the seed fatty

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acid esters, was subjected to GC analysis. Fatty acid esters from both seed and leaf tissues were analyzed with a Supelco SP-2330 column.

Glucosinolates were purified from seeds or leaves by first heating the tissue at 95°C for 10 minutes. Preheated ethanol:water (50:50) is and after heating at 95°C for a further 10 minutes, the extraction solvent is applied to a DEAE Sephadex column which had been previously equilibrated with 0.5 M pyridine acetate. Desulfoglucosinolates were eluted with 300 ul water and analyzed by reverse phase HPLC monitoring at 226 nm.

For wax alkanes, samples were extracted using an identical method as fatty acids and extracts were analyzed on a HP 5890 GC coupled with a 5973 MSD. Samples were chromatographed on a J&W DB35 mass spectrometer (J&W Scientific).

To measure prenyl lipids levels, seeds or leaves were pulverized with 1 to 2% pyrogallol as an antioxidant. For seeds, extracted samples were filtered and a portion removed for tocopherol and carotenoid/chlorophyll analysis by HPLC. The remaining material was saponified for sterol determination. For leaves, an aliquot was removed and diluted with methanol and chlorophyll A, chlorophyll B, and total carotenoids measured by spectrophotometry by determining absorbance at 665.2 nm, 652.5 nm, and 470 nm. An aliquot was removed for tocopherol and carotenoid/chlorophyll composition by HPLC using a Waters uBondapak C18 column (4.6 mm x 150 mm). The remaining methanolic solution was saponified with 10% KOH at 80°C for one hour. The samples were cooled and diluted with a mixture of methanol and water. A solution of 2% methylene chloride in hexane was mixed in and the samples were centrifuged. The aqueous methanol phase was again re-extracted 2% methylene chloride in hexane and, after centrifugation, the two upper phases were combined and evaporated. 2% methylene chloride in hexane was added to the tubes and the samples were then extracted with one ml of water. The upper phase was removed, dried, and resuspended in 400 ul of 2% methylene chloride in hexane and analyzed by gas chromatography using a 50 m DB-5ms (0.25 mm ID, 0.25 um phase, J&W Scientific).

Insoluble sugar levels were measured by the method essentially described by Reiter et al., Plant Journal 12:335-345. This method analyzes the neutral sugar composition of cell wall polymers found in Arabidopsis leaves. Soluble sugars were separated from sugar polymers by extracting leaves with hot 70% ethanol. The remaining residue containing the insoluble polysaccharides was then acid hydrolyzed with allose added as an internal standard. Sugar monomers generated by the hydrolysis were then reduced to the corresponding alditols by treatment with NaBH4, then were acetylated to generate the volatile alditol acetates which were then analyzed by GC-FID. Identity of the peaks was determined by comparing the retention times

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of known sugars converted to the corresponding alditol acetates with the retention times of peaks from wild-type plant extracts. Alditol acetates were analyzed on a Supelco SP-2330 capillary column (30 m x 250 um x 0.2 um) using a temperature program beginning at 180° C for 2 minutes followed by an increase to 220° C in 4 minutes. After holding at 220° C for 10 minutes, the oven temperature is increased to 240° C in 2 minutes and held at this temperature for 10 minutes and brought back to room temperature.

To identify plants with alterations in total seed oil or protein content, 150mg of seeds from T2 progeny plants were subjected to analysis by Near Infrared Reflectance (NIR) using a Foss NirSystems Model 6500 with a spinning cup transport system.

Table 3 shows the phenotypes observed for particular overexpressor or knockout plants and provides the SEQ ID No., the internal reference code (GID), whether a knockout or overexpressor plant was analyzed and the observed phenotype.

Table 3

		TADIC 5
GIDs	Knockout (KO) or	Phenotype observed
	overexpressor (OE)	
G214	OE	Up to 111% increase in seed lutein
G226	OE	Up to 17% increase in seed protein content
G229	OE	Up to 11% increase in seed oil, 13% decrease in seed protein
G241	OE	Up to 13% decrease in seed oil
G464	OE	Up to 12% decrease in seed oil, 25% increase in seed protein
G663	OE	Up to 16% decrease in seed oil, 14% increase in seed protein
G776	OE	Up to 31% alteration in some seed fatty acids, including
		······
G778	OE	Up to 32% increase in seed 18:1 fatty acid
G865	OE	Up to 39% increase seed protein; 23% increase in seed oil
G869	OE	Up to 25% alteration in some seed fatty acids
G883	OE	Up to 47% decrease in seed lutein
G938	OE	Up to 115% increase in some seed fatty acids
G1328	OE	Up to 43% decrease in seed lutein
G584	OE	Larger seeds
G668	OE	Reduced seed color

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For a particular overexpressor that shows a less beneficial seed characteristic, it may be more useful to select a plant with a decreased expression of the particular transcription factor. For a particular knockout that shows a less beneficial seed characteristic, it may be more useful to select a plant with an increased expression of the particular transcription factor.

5 EXAMPLE VIII. IDENTIFICATION OF HOMOLOGOUS SEQUENCES

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Homologous sequences from *Arabidopsis* and plant species other than *Arabidopsis* were identified using database sequence search tools, such as the Basic Local Alignment Search Tool (BLAST) (Altschul et al. (1990) <u>J. Mol. Biol.</u> 215:403-410; and Altschul et al. (1997) <u>Nucl. Acid Res.</u> 25: 3389-3402). The tblastx sequence analysis programs were employed using the BLOSUM-62 scoring matrix (Henikoff, S. and Henikoff, J. G. (1992) <u>Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA</u> 89: 10915-10919).

Identified *Arabidopsis* homologous sequences are provided in Figure 2 and included in the Sequence Listing. The percent sequence identity among these sequences is as low as 47% sequence identity. Additionally, the entire NCBI GenBank database was filtered for sequences from all plants except *Arabidopsis thaliana* by selecting all entries in the NCBI GenBank database associated with NCBI taxonomic ID 33090 (Viridiplantae; all plants) and excluding entries associated with taxonomic ID 3701 (*Arabidopsis thaliana*). These sequences were compared to sequences representing genes of SEQ IDs Nos. 1-54 on 9/26/2000 using the Washington University TBLASTX algorithm (version 2.0a19MP). For each gene of SEQ IDs Nos. 1-54, individual comparisons were ordered by probability score (P-value), where the score reflects the probability that a particular alignment occurred by chance. For example, a score of 3.6e-40 is 3.6 x 10⁻⁴⁰. For up to ten species, the gene with the lowest P-value (and therefore the most likely homolog) is listed in Figure 3.

In addition to P-values, comparisons were also scored by percentage identity. Percentage identity reflects the degree to which two segments of DNA or protein are identical over a particular length. The ranges of percent identity between the non-Arabidopsis genes shown in Figure 3 and the Arabidopsis genes in the sequence listing are: SEQ ID No. 1: 38%-89%; SEQ ID No. 3: 50%-69%; SEQ ID No. 5: 68%-93%; SEQ ID No. 7: 69%-84%; SEQ ID No. 9: 34%-60%; SEQ ID No. 11: 52%-81%; SEQ ID No. 13: 48%-81%; SEQ ID No. 15: 37%-80%; SEQ ID No. 17: 48%-83%; SEQ ID No. 19: 31%-68%; SEQ ID No. 21: 47%-90%; SEQ ID No. 23: 57%-88%; SEQ ID No. 25: 39%-79%; SEQ ID No. 27: 35%-84%; SEQ ID No. 29: 54%-89%; SEQ ID No. 31: 42%-88%; SEQ ID No. 33: 41%-75%; SEQ ID No. 35: 34%-67%; SEQ ID No. 37: 72%-86%; SEQ ID No. 39: 39%-84%; SEQ ID No. 41: 40%-58%; SEQ ID No. 43: 44%-82%; SEQ ID

No. 45: 54%-68%; SEQ ID No. 47: 48%-64%; SEQ ID No. 49: 46%-88%; SEQ ID No. 51: 52%-92%; and SEQ ID No. 53: 48%-80%.

The polynucleotides and polypeptides in the Sequence Listing and the identified homologous sequences may be stored in a computer system and have associated or linked with the sequences a function, such as that the polynucleotides and polypeptides are useful for modifying the seed characteristics of a plant.

All references, publications, patents and other documents herein are incorporated by reference in their entirety for all purposes. Although the invention has been described with reference to the embodiments and examples above, it should be understood that various modifications can be made without departing from the spirit of the invention.

What is claimed is:

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1. A transgenic plant with modified seed characteristics, which plant comprises a recombinant polynucleotide comprising a nucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of:

- (a) a nucleotide sequence encoding a polypeptide comprising a sequence selected from SEQ ID Nos. 2N, where N=1-27, or a complementary nucleotide sequence thereof;
 - (b) a nucleotide sequence encoding a polypeptide comprising a conservatively substituted variant of a polypeptide of (a);
 - (c) a nucleotide sequence comprising a sequence selected from those of SEQ ID Nos. 2N-1, where N=1-27, or a complementary nucleotide sequence thereof;
 - (d) a nucleotide sequence comprising silent substitutions in a nucleotide sequence of (c);
 - (e) a nucleotide sequence which hybridizes under stringent conditions to a nucleotide sequence of one or more of: (a), (b), (c), or (d);
 - (f) a nucleotide sequence comprising at least 15 consecutive nucleotides of a sequence of any of (a)-(e);
 - (g) a nucleotide sequence comprising a subsequence or fragment of any of (a)-(f), which subsequence or fragment encodes a polypeptide that modifies a plant's seed characteristics;
 - (h) a nucleotide sequence having at least 31% sequence identity to a nucleotide sequence of any of (a)-(g);
 - (i) a nucleotide sequence having at least 60% identity sequence identity to a nucleotide sequence of any of (a)-(g);
 - (j) a nucleotide sequence which encodes a polypeptide having at least 31% identity sequence identity to a polypeptide of SEQ ID Nos. 2N, where N=1-27;
- 25 (k) a nucleotide sequence which encodes a polypeptide having at least 60% identity sequence identity to a polypeptide of SEQ ID Nos. 2N, where N=1-27; and (l) a nucleotide sequence which encodes a polypeptide having at least 65% sequence identity to a conserved domain of a polypeptide of SEQ ID Nos. 2N, where N=1-27.
- The transgenic plant of claim 1, further comprising a constitutive, inducible, or tissueactive promoter operably linked to said nucleotide sequence.
 - 3. The transgenic plant of claim 1, wherein the plant is selected from the group consisting of: soybean, wheat, corn, potato, cotton, rice, oilseed rape, sunflower, alfalfa, sugarcane, turf,

banana, blackberry, blueberry, strawberry, raspberry, cantaloupe, carrot, cauliflower, coffee, cucumber, eggplant, grapes, honeydew, lettuce, mango, melon, onion, papaya, peas, peppers, pineapple, spinach, squash, sweet corn, tobacco, tomato, watermelon, rosaceous fruits, and vegetable brassicas.

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- 4. An isolated or recombinant polynucleotide comprising a nucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of:
 - (a) a nucleotide sequence encoding a polypeptide comprising a sequence selected from SEQ ID Nos. 2N, where N=1-27, or a complementary nucleotide sequence thereof;

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- (b) a nucleotide sequence encoding a polypeptide comprising a conservatively substituted variant of a polypeptide of (a);
- (c) a nucleotide sequence comprising a sequence selected from those of SEQ ID Nos. 2N-1, where N=1-27, or a complementary nucleotide sequence thereof;
- (d) a nucleotide sequence comprising silent substitutions in a nucleotide sequence of (c);

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- (e) a nucleotide sequence which hybridizes under stringent conditions to a nucleotide sequence of one or more of: (a), (b), (c), or (d);
- (f) a nucleotide sequence comprising at least 15 consecutive nucleotides of a sequence of any of (a)-(e);

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- (g) a nucleotide sequence comprising a subsequence or fragment of any of (a)-(f), which subsequence or fragment encodes a polypeptide that modifies a plant's seed characteristics;
- (h) a nucleotide sequence having at least 31% sequence identity to a nucleotide sequence of any of (a)-(g);

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- (i) a nucleotide sequence having at least 60% identity sequence identity to a nucleotide sequence of any of (a)-(g);
- (j) a nucleotide sequence which encodes a polypeptide having at least 31% identity sequence identity to a polypeptide of SEQ ID Nos. 2N, where N=1-27;
- (k) a nucleotide sequence which encodes a polypeptide having at least 60% identity sequence identity to a polypeptide of SEQ ID Nos. 2N, where N=1-27; and

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(l) a nucleotide sequence which encodes a conserved domain of a polypeptide having at least 65% sequence identity to a conserved domain of a polypeptide of SEQ ID Nos. 2N, where N=1-27.

5. The isolated or recombinant polynucleotide of claim 4, further comprising a constitutive, inducible, or tissue-active promoter operably linked to the nucleotide sequence.

- 6. A cloning or expression vector comprising the isolated or recombinant polynucleotide of claim 4.
- 7. A cell comprising the cloning or expression vector of claim 6.
- 8. A transgenic plant comprising the isolated or recombinant polynucleotide of claim 4.

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- 9. A composition produced by one or more of:
 - (a) incubating one or more polynucleotide of claim 4 with a nuclease;
 - (b) incubating one or more polynucleotide of claim 4 with a restriction enzyme;
 - (c) incubating one or more polynucleotide of claim 4 with a polymerase;

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- (d) incubating one or more polynucleotide of claim 4 with a polymerase and a primer;
- (e) incubating one or more polynucleotide of claim 4 with a cloning vector, or
- (f) incubating one or more polynucleotide of claim 4 with a cell.
- 10. A composition comprising two or more different polynucleotides of claim 4.

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- 11. An isolated or recombinant polypeptide comprising a subsequence of at least about 15 contiguous amino acids encoded by the recombinant or isolated polynucleotide of claim 4.
- 12. A plant ectopically expressing an isolated polypeptide of claim 11.

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- 13. A method for producing a plant having a modified seed characteristics, the method comprising altering the expression of the isolated or recombinant polynucleotide of claim 4 or the expression levels or activity of a polypeptide of claim 11 in a plant, thereby producing a modified plant, and selecting the modified plant for improved seed characteristics thereby providing the modified plant with a modified seed characteristics.
- 14. The method of claim 13, wherein the polynucleotide is a polynucleotide of claim 4.

15. A method of identifying a factor that is modulated by or interacts with a polypeptide encoded by a polynucleotide of claim 4, the method comprising:

- (a) expressing a polypeptide encoded by the polynucleotide in a plant; and
- (b) identifying at least one factor that is modulated by or interacts with the polypeptide.

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- 16. The method of claim 15, wherein the identifying is performed by detecting binding by the polypeptide to a promoter sequence, or detecting interactions between an additional protein and the polypeptide in a yeast two hybrid system.
- 17. The method of claim 15, wherein the identifying is performed by detecting expression of a factor by hybridization to a microarray, subtractive hybridization or differential display.
 - 18. A method of identifying a molecule that modulates activity or expression of a polynucleotide or polypeptide of interest, the method comprising:
 - (a) placing the molecule in contact with a plant comprising the polynucleotide or polypeptide encoded by the polynucleotide of claim 4; and,
 - (b) monitoring one or more of:
 - (i) expression level of the polynucleotide in the plant;
 - (ii) expression level of the polypeptide in the plant;
 - (iii) modulation of an activity of the polypeptide in the plant; or
 - (iv) modulation of an activity of the polynucleotide in the plant.

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- 19. An integrated system, computer or computer readable medium comprising one or more character strings corresponding to a polynucleotide of claim 4, or to a polypeptide encoded by the polynucleotide.
- 20. The integrated system, computer or computer readable medium of claim 19, further comprising a link between said one or more sequence strings to a modified plant seed characteristics phenotype.

- 21. A method of identifying a sequence similar or homologous to one or more polynucleotides of claim 4, or one or more polypeptides encoded by the polynucleotides, the method comprising:
 - (a) providing a sequence database; and,

(b) querying the sequence database with one or more target sequences corresponding to the one or more polynucleotides or to the one or more polypeptides to identify one or more sequence members of the database that display sequence similarity or homology to one or more of the one or more target sequences.

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- 22. The method of claim 21, wherein the querying comprises aligning one or more of the target sequences with one or more of the one or more sequence members in the sequence database.
- 10 23. The method of claim 21, wherein the querying comprises identifying one or more of the one or more sequence members of the database that meet a user-selected identity criteria with one or more of the target sequences.
- 24. The method of claim 21, further comprising linking the one or more of the polynucleotides of claim 4, or encoded polypeptides, to a modified plant seed characteristics phenotype.
 - 25. A plant comprising altered expression levels of an isolated or recombinant polynucleotide of claim 4.

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- 26. A plant comprising altered expression levels or the activity of an isolated or recombinant polypeptide of claim 11.
- 27. A plant lacking a nucleotide sequence encoding a polypeptide of claim 11.

Figure 1

SEQ ID No.	GID	cDNA or protein	conserved domain
1	G214	cDNA	
2	G214	protein	22-71
3	G226	cDNA	
4	G226	protein	28-78
5	G229	cDNA	
6 .	G229	protein	14-120
7	G241	cDNA	
8	G241	protein	14-114
9	G464	cDNA	
10	G464	protein	7-15,70-80,125-158,183-219
11	G663	cDNA	
12	G663	protein	9-111
13	G776	cDNA	
14	G776	protein	27-175
15	G778	cDNA	·
16	G778	protein	220-267
17	G865	cDNA	
18	G865	protein	36-103
19	G869	cDNA	
20	G869	protein	109-177
21	G883	cDNA	
22	G883	protein	245-302
23	G938	cDNA	
24	G938	protein	96-104
25	G1328	cDNA	
26	G1328	protein	14-119
27	G584	cDNA	
28	G584	protein	401-494
29	G668	cDNA	•
30	G668	protein	13-113

Figure 2

SEQ ID No.	GID	homolog	cDNA or protein	conserved domain
31 ·	G680	homolog of G214	cDNA	
32	G680	homolog of G214	protein	24-70
33	G682	homolog of G226	cDNA	
34	G682	homolog of G226	protein	22-53
35	G225	homolog of G226	cDNA :	
36	G225	homolog of G226	protein	39-76
37	G678	homolog of G229	cDNA	
38	G678	homolog of G229	protein	14-115
39	G233	homolog of G241	cDNA	
40	G233	homolog of G241	protein	14-114
41	G463	homolog of G464	cDNA	
42	G463	homolog of G464	protein	14-23, 77-88, 130-146, 194-227
. 43	G2422	homolog of G663	cDNA	
44	G2422	homolog of G663	protein	9-110
45	G2421	homolog of G663	cDNA	
. 46	G2421	homolog of G663	protein	9-110
47	G772	homolog of G776	cDNA ·	
48	G772	homolog of G776	protein	27-176
49	G866	homolog of G883	cDNA	
50	G866	homolog of G883	protein	43-300
51	G941	homolog of G938	cDNA	
52	G941	homolog of G938	protein	95-103
53	G198	homolog of G1328	cDNA	
54	G198	homolog of G1328	protein	14-117

Figure 3A

				TO
SEQ IDs		Genbank NID		Species
- 1	G214	8170933		Lycopersicon esculentum
1	G214	9205339		Glycine max
1	G214	8577344		Zea mays
1	G214	9119112	2.40E-18	Medicago truncatula
1	G214	7660673	4.80E-15	Sorghum bicolor
1	G214	8213273	4.40E-14	Oryza sativa
1	G214	3325786	4.70E-10	Gossypium hirsutum
1	G214	9435251	1.50E-09	Hordeum vulgare
1	G214	9411569	6.80E-09	Triticum aestivum
1	G214	7614730	3.00E-07	Lotus japonicus
3	G226	4396287		Glycine max
3 .	G226	9410205		Triticum aestivum
3	G226	3857004	0.11	Populus tremula x Populus tremuloides
3	G226	2428139	0.35	Oryza sativa .
5	G229	7337390		Lycopersicon esculentum
5	G229	7244424		Mentha x piperita
- 5	G229	7776053		Lotus japonicus
5	G229	2921335		Gossypium hirsutum
. 5	G229	1491932		Zea mays
5	G229	6455590		Glycine max
5	G229	6020191		Pinus taeda
5	G229	7765706		Medicago truncatula
5	G229	7629167		Gossypium arboreum
5				Oryza sativa
	G229	6850206		
7	G241	6552360		Nicotiana tabacum
7	G241	6782745		Oryza sativa
7	G241	8097368		Hordeum vulgare
7	G241	20560		Petunia x hybrida
7	G241	7217727		Sorghum bicolor
7	G241	5891408		Lycopersicon esculentum
7	G241	5139803		Glycine max
7	G241	7560175		Medicago truncatula
7	G241	8381332		Gossypium arboreum
7	G241	4886263		Antirrhinum majus
9	G464	6527230		Lycopersicon esculentum
9	G464	9305572		Sorghum bicolor
9	G464	6604917		Medicago truncatula
9	G464	5058123		Glycine max
9	G464	3760881		Oryza sativa
9	G464	5044476		Gossypium hirsutum
9	G464	9412603		Triticum aestivum
9	G464	7777277		Lotus japonicus
9	G464	9410371		Hordeum vulgare
9	G464	7624108		Gossypium arboreum
11	G663	7673087		Petunia integrifolia
11	G663	7673091		Petunia x hybrida
11	G663	7339148		Lycopersicon esculentum
11	G663	7673097		Petunia axillaris
11	G663	5048991		Gossypium hirsutum
11	G663	6455590		Glycine max
11	G663	7560175		Medicago truncatula
11	G663	7244424		Mentha x piperita
11	G663	6020191	2.90E-25	Pinus taeda

Figure 3B

		'. F a 		
SEQ IDs		Genbank NID		Species
11	G663	4138298		Oryza sativa subsp. indica
13	G776	8578423		Mesembryanthemum crystallinum
13	G776 ·	7411573		Lycopersicon esculentum
13	G776	9253340		Solanum tuberosum
13	G776	8383411		Euphorbia esula
13	G776	7565426	1.50E-39	Medicago truncatula
13	G776	6666629	2.50E-33	Glycine max
13	G776	6732155	3.60E-33	Triticum monococcum
13	G776	7502501	3.00E-32	Gossypium arboreum
13	G776	8708684	3.80E-32	Hordeum vulgare
. 13	G776	9307772	2.10E-31	Sorghum bicolor
15	G778	9258500		Glycine max
15	G778	9211293		Oryza sativa
15	G778	4380303		Lycopersicon esculentum
15	G778	7718953		Medicago truncatula
15	G778	7720768		Lotus japonicus
15	G778	6536575		Zea mays
15	G778	1668906	0.82	Citrus sinensis
17	G865	9417297		Triticum aestivum
. 17	G865	7206394		Medicago truncatula
17	G865	7796858		Glycine max
17	G865	4387560		Lycopersicon esculentum
17	G865	569065		Oryza sativa
17	G865	7788764		Lotus japonicus
17	G865	790362		Nicotiana tabacum
17	G865	7528275		Mesembryanthemum crystallinum
17	G865	3264766		Prunus armeniaca
17	G865	8098026		Hordeum vulgare
19	G869	2213784		Lycopersicon esculentum
19	G869	3065894		Nicotiana tabacum
19	G869	8570080		Oryza sativa
19	G869	7560260		Medicago truncatula
19	G869	7534890		Sorghum bicolor
		6455322		Glycine max
19	G869 G869	9362061		Triticum aestivum
19 19		7788764		Lotus japonicus
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19	G869 G869	7624302 3858036		Gossypium arboreum Populus balsamifera subsp. trichocarpa
19				Nicotiana tabacum
21 21	G883	4760595 4894962		Avena sativa
	G883	6719425		Glycine max
21	G883 G883			Lycopersicon esculentum
21		5273248		Sorghum bicolor
21	G883	9302479		
21	G883	6799932		Medicago truncatula
21	G883	5456433		Zea mays
21	G883	8706346		Hordeum vulgare
21	G883	8404566		Oryza sativa
21	G883	1432055		Petroselinum crispum
23	G938	4239844		Nicotiana tabacum
23	G938	7739794		Dianthus caryophyllus
23	G938	7567728		Medicago truncatula
23	G938	8894549		Cicer arietinum
23	G938	8104209	9.00E-90	Lycopersicon esculentum

Figure 3C

SEQ IDs	Gene Ids	Genbank NID	P-value	Species
23	G938	6462339		Gossypium hirsutum
23	G938	9204568		Glycine max
23	G938	7720839		Lotus japonicus
23	G938	7324903		Lycopersicon pennellii
23	G938	2427923	4.20E-47	
25	G1328	4383290		Lycopersicon esculentum
25	G1328	1946266		Oryza sativa
25	G1328	9264503		Glycine max
25	G1328	8381332		Gossypium arboreum
25	G1328	9363004		Triticum aestivum
25	G1328	7765706		Medicago truncatula
25	G1328	20562		Petunia x hybrida
25	G1328	5050757		Gossypium hirsutum
25	G1328	5860031		Pinus taeda
25	G1328	4886263		Antirrhinum majus
27	G584	1142618		Phaseolus vulgaris
27	G584	4321761		Zea mays
27	G584	9280727		Oryza sativa
27	G584	6175251		Lycopersicon esculentum
27	G584	9193975		Medicago truncatula
27	G584	9364538		Triticum aestivum
27	G584	6847033		Glycine max
27	G584	5049283		Gossypium hirsutum
27	G584	7781217		Lotus japonicus
27	G584	4519200		Perilla frutescens
29	G668	8172976		Medicago truncatula
29	G668	9252441		Solanum tuberosum
29	G668	5897694		Lycopersicon esculentum
29	G668	8380712		Gossypium arboreum
29	G668	7685936		Glycine max
29	G668	1945280		Oryza sativa
29	G668	20562	1.10E-40	Petunia x hybrida
29	G668	7217727		Sorghum bicolor
29	G668	6552360	1.90E-36	Nicotiana tabacum
29	G668	4886263	5.80E-36	Antirrhinum majus
31	G680	9258166	5.70E-36	Glycine max
31	G680	9255178	3.00E-29	Zea mays
31	G680	5274804	1.20E-27	Lycopersicon esculentum
31	G680	4974199		Oryza sativa
31	G680	3325786	2.10E-21	Gossypium hirsutum
31	G680	9119112		Medicago truncatula
31 .	G680	7660673	3.20E-17	Sorghum bicolor
31	G680	7243970	6.10E-16	Mentha x piperita
31	G680	3858093	2.10E-10	Populus balsamifera subsp. trichocarpa
31	G680	8845091	3.70E-10	Triticum aestivum
33	G682	309571	4.40E-08	
33	G682	4396287		
33	G682	3857004		Populus tremula x Populus tremuloides
33	G682	9410205		Triticum aestivum
33	G682	8382118		Gossypium arboreum
33	G682	2428139		Oryza sativa
33	G682	7339148		Lycopersicon esculentum
33	G682	9302672	0.32	Sorghum bicolor

Figure 3D

		·		
SEQ IDs	Gene Ids	Genbank NID	P-value	Species
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33	G682	6555777	0.46	Pinus taeda
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35	G225	309571	0.00029	Zea mays
35	G225	3857004	0.001	Populus tremula x Populus tremuloides
35	G225	9410205	0.019	Triticum aestivum
35	G225	9426190	0.025	Triticum turgidum subsp. durum
35	G225	8382118	0.046	Gossypium arboreum
35	G225	6782756	0.27	Oryza sativa
35	G225	7721017	0.4	Lotus japonicus
35	G225	6020136	0.47	Pinus taeda
35	G225	2921331	0.48	Gossypium hirsutum
37	G678	7244424	8.70E-50	Mentha x piperita
37	G678	7776053		Lotus japonicus
37	G678	7337390		Lycopersicon esculentum
37	G678	2921335	2.30E-43	
37	G678	6455590	8.30E-43	
37	G678	1491932		Zea mays
37	G678	5860031		Pinus taeda
37	G678	7765706		Medicago truncatula
	G678	6850206		Oryza sativa
37	G678	7217727	2.00E-37	
37 39	G233	6552360		Nicotiana tabacum
	G233	20560		Petunia x hybrida
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39	G233	5891103		Lycopersicon esculentum
39	G233 G233	6782745	1.80E-52	
39	G233	7560175		Medicago truncatula
39 39	G233	7217727	8.30E-51	
39	G233	8097368		Hordeum vulgare
39	G233	8381332		Gossypium arboreum
39	G233	5048991	3.50E-41	
41	G233 G463	6527230		Lycopersicon esculentum
41	G463	9305572		Sorghum bicolor
41	G463	3760881	1.20E-31	
	G463	6604917		Medicago truncatula
41	G463	5058123		Glycine max
41		5044476		Gossypium hirsutum
41	G463	9412603		Triticum aestivum
- 41	G463			Hordeum vulgare
41	G463	9419394		Gossypium arboreum
41	G463	7624108		Nicotiana tabacum
41	G463	8547152		Petunia integrifolia
43	G2422	7673087		Lycopersicon esculentum
43	G2422	7339148 7673083		Petunia x hybrida
43	G2422			Petunia x riyorida Petunia axillaris
43	G2422	7673097		Gossypium hirsutum
43	G2422	5048991		Glycine max
43	G2422	6455590		Pinus taeda
43	G2422	6020191		
43	G2422	309571		Zea mays
43	G2422	7560832		Medicago truncatula
43	G2422	9363004		Triticum aestivum
45	G2421	7673087	1. IUE-46	Petunia integrifolia

Figure 3E

SEQ IDs	Gene Ids	Genbank NID	P-value	Species
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45	G2421	7673091	1.50E-31	Petunia x hybrida
45	G2421	8380196		Gossypium arboreum
45	G2421	7673095		Petunia axillaris
45	G2421	7339148		Lycopersicon esculentum
45	G2421	8747182		Medicago truncatula
45	G2421	7217727		Sorghum bicolor
45	G2421	6073050		Glycine max
45	G2421	. 1101769		Picea mariana
47	G772	8578423	4.80E-58	Mesembryanthemum crystallinum
47	G772	7570276	3.00E-52	Medicago truncatula
47	G772	7411573		Lycopersicon esculentum
47	G772	6341483		Glycine max
47	G772	1279639		Petunia x hybrida
. 47	G772	7722907		Lotus japonicus
47	G772	8405571		Hordeum vulgare
47	G772	6730945		Oryza sativa
47	G772	9302206		Sorghum bicolor
47	G772	5047907		Gossypium hirsutum
49	G866	4760595		Nicotiana tabacum
49	G866	4894962		Avena sativa
49	G866	6719425		Glycine max
49	G866	5273248		Lycopersicon esculentum
49	G866	9302479		Sorghum bicolor
49	G866	6799932		Medicago truncatula
49	G866	4886128		Zea mays
. 49	G866	8404566		Oryza sativa
49	G866	8706346		Hordeum vulgare
49	G866	1432055		Petroselinum crispum .
51	G941	4239844		Nicotiana tabacum
51	G941	7739794		Dianthus caryophyllus
51	G941	7567728		Medicago truncatula
51	G941	8104209		Lycopersicon esculentum
51	G941	8894549		Cicer arietinum
51	G941	5606033	1.60E-79	Glycine max
51	G941	6462339		Gossypium hirsutum
51	G941	7720839		Lotus japonicus
51	G941	7324903	1.00E-55	Lycopersicon pennellii
51	G941	2427923		Oryza sativa
53	G198	4383290		Lycopersicon esculentum
53	G198	1946266	1.10E-58	Oryza sativa
53	G198	9363004		Triticum aestivum
53	G198	8381332	6.40E-51	Gossypium arboreum
53	G198	9264503	1.30E-50	Glycine max
53	G198	5050757	4.10E-46	Gossypium hirsutum
53	G198	20562	9.30E-46	Petunia x hybrida
53	G198	7765706	2.70E-45	Medicago truncatula
53	G198	5860031	5.40E-45	Pinus taeda
53	G198	4886263	7.30E-45	Antirrhinum majus

MBI-17 Sequence Listing.ST25 SEQUENCE LISTING

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Page 1

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Phe Thr His Gln Tyr Leu Ser Ala Ala Ser Ser Met Asn Lys Ser Cys 165 170 175

Ile Glu Thr Ser Asn Ala Ser Thr Phe Arg Glu Phe Leu Pro Ser Arg 180 185 190

Glu Glu Gly Ser Gln Asn Asn Arg Val Arg Lys Glu Ser Asn Ser Asp 195 200 205

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Pro Trp Lys Ser Val Ser Asp Glu Gly Arg Ile Ala Phe Gln Ala Leu 485 490 495

Phe Ser Arg Glu Val Leu Pro Gln Ser Phe Thr Tyr Arg Glu Glu His 500 505 510

Arg Glu Glu Glu Gln Gln Gln Glu Gln Arg Tyr Pro Met Ala Leu 515 520 525

Asp Leu Asn Phe Thr Ala Gln Leu Thr Pro Val Asp Asp Gln Glu Glu 530 540

Lys Arg Asn Thr Gly Phe Leu Gly Ile Gly Leu Asp Ala Ser Lys Leu 545 555 5560

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Leu 150	Gly	aga Arg	Thr	Ser	Arg 155	Ser	Ala	Met	Lys	Pro 160	Lys	Ile	Arg	Arg	Thr 165	535 583
Lys	Thr	cgt Arg	Lys	Thr 170	Lys	Lys	Thr	Ser	Ala 175	Pro	Pro	Glu	Pro	Asn 180	Ala	631
Asp	Val	Ala	Gly 185	Ala	Asp	Lys	Glu	Ala 190	Leu	Met	Val	Glu	Ser 195	Ser	Gly	679
Ala	Glu	Ala 200 aat	Glu	Leu	Gly	Arg	Pro 205	Cys	Asp	Tyr	Tyr	Gly 210	Asp	Asp	Сув	727
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Asp 230	Asp	Asp	Ile	Ile	Asp 235	Leu	Leū	Leū	Asp	G1u 240	Ser	Āsp	Pro	ĞĨy	His 245	

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11DT-T/	Searchice	TITOLING.	

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			gac Asp											tga		1156
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Tyr Gly Asp Asp Cys Asn Lys Asn Leu Met Ser Ile Asn Gly Asp Asn

Gly Val Leu Thr Phe Asp Asp Asp Ile Ile Asp Leu Leu Leu Asp Glu

Ser Asp Pro Gly His Leu Tyr Thr Asn Thr Thr Cys Gly Gly Gly

Glu Leu His Asn Ile Arg Asp Ser Glu Gly Ala Arg Gly Phe Ser Asp

Thr Trp Asn Gln Gly Asn Leu Asp Cys Leu Leu Gln Ser Cys Pro Ser 280

Val Glu Ser Phe Leu Asn Tyr Asp His Gln Val Asn Asp Ala Ser Thr

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Asn Leu Trp His Glu Lys Glu Asn Pro Asp Ser Met Val Ser Trp Leu

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	aga Arg														ggc Gly		249
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1046

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103

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200

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Pro Arg Ser Ser Gln Val Val Gly Trp Pro Pro Ile Gly Leu His Arg

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										gga Gly							214
										tgc Cys 45						: ;	262
										atc Ile							310
										ctt Leu							358
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892

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Cys	Glu	Asn	Ser 180	Ile	Thr	аұЭ	Asn	Lys 185	Asp	Asp	Glu	Lys	Asp 190	Asp	Phe
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Glu Ser Asp Gln Gln Asn His His Glu Asn Asp Leu Lys Pro Glu Glu 255 cat aac aac aat aat aat tat gat gaa aac gag gaa acc ctc aaa cgc 270 gag cag atg gaa gag gag gag cgt cct cct cct cga cct gta tgc gtt ctc 280 gag cag atg gaa gag gag gag cgt cct cct cct cga cct gta tgc gtt ctc 300 gaac aaa gaa gct cca tta cct ctt ctg caa tac aaa cgt aga cgc caa 1023 Asn Lys Glu Ala Pro Leu Pro Leu Ly Gln Tyr Lys Arg Arg Arg Gln 305 agc gag tcc aac aac aac tca agc agg aac aca cag gac cat tgt tcg ser Asn Asn Asn Asn Asn Asn Ser Ser Arg Asn Thr Gln Asp His Cys Ser 320 tcc aca aca aca aca gt gtc gac aat aca aca act tat atc tca tct ser Thr Thr Thr Val Asp Asn Thr Thr Thr Leu Ile Ser Ser Ser Arg Asn Thr Ala Ile Ser Ala Leu Leu Glu Phe Ser Leu 350 atg ggt atc tcc gac aag aaa gaa aga cag cag cat tgt tcg ctt gc gct gcc gct gcc acc aca act act gcc atc tct gca ttg ctt gag ttc tca ctc Ala Ala Ala Thr Asn Thr Ala Ile Ser Ala Leu Leu Glu Phe Ser Leu 366 atg ggt atc tcc gac aag aaa gaa aga ccg cag caa ccg cta cgt cct het Gly Ile Ser Asp Lys Lys Glu Lys Pro Gln Gln Pro Leu Arg Pro 395 cac aag gaa cct ttg cct cct caa act cca act tca gat tct cct gra tgc gc act acg dct his Lys Glu Pro Pro Gln Thr Pro Leu Ala Ser Pro Glu Glu 395 aag gtt aat gat ctc cag aag ag gag at cac cag at tct gct gcd acg cac cac acg acg gag acg cac cac acg acg	ctc Leu	atc	aac Asn	Ile	aat Asn	gag Glu	cca Pro	ccg Pro	Arg	gag Glu	aca Thr	gct Ala	cca Pro	Leu	gat Asp	atc Ile	8.	31
Ris Asn Asn Asn Asn Asn Asn Try Asp Glu Asn Glu Glu Thr Leu Lys Arg 270 gag cag atg gaa gag gag cgt cct cct cga cct gta tgc gtt ctc glu Glu Glu Glu Glu Glu Glu Arg Pro Pro Arg Pro Val Cys Val Leu 300 aca aca aaa gaa gac cct ctt ctg caa tac aac cgt aga cgc caa lo23 Asn Lys Glu Ala Pro Leu Pro Leu Leu Gln Try Lys Arg Arg Arg Gln 315 ago gag tcc aac aac aac tca agc agg aac aca cag gac cat tgt tcg Ser Glu Ser Asn Asn Asn Asn Ser Ser Arg Asn Thr Gln Asp His Cys Ser 320 ago gag tcc aca aca cac aca tca agc aga aca aca cag gac cat tgt tcg lo71 ago go get gcc aca act gt gac aat aca acc act lea acc act lea agc agg and tca acc cac tca tca ser Thr Thr Thr Thr Thr Val Asp Asn Thr Thr Thr Leu Ile Ser Ser Ser Ser Ala Ala Ala Ala Thr Asn Thr Ala Ile Ser Ala Leu Leu Glu Phe Ser Leu 350 at 360	gaa Glu	tcg Ser	Asp	caa Gln	cag Gln	aat Asn	cat His	His	Glu	aat Asn	gac Asp	ctc Leu	Lys	ccg Pro	gag Glu	gag Glu	81	79
aac aaa gaa gct cca tta cct ctt ctg caa tac aac cgt aga cgc caa logs car cgu ser ship ship ship ship ship ship ship ship	cat His	Asn	aac Asn	aat Asn	aat Asn	aat Asn	Tyr	gat Asp	gaa Glu	aac Asn	gag Glu	Glu	aca Thr	ctc Leu	aaa Lys	cgc Arg	92	27
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Met Gly Ile Ser Asp Lys Lys Glu Lys Pro Gln Gln Fro Leu Arg Pro 380 cac aag gaa cct ttg cct cct caa act cca ctt gca tct cct gaa gag gag His Lys Glu Pro Leu Pro Pro Gln Thr Pro Leu Ala Ser Pro Glu Glu Glu Japs Val Asn Asp Leu Gln Lys Glu Ile His Gln Met Ser Val Glu Arg 410 gaa act ttc aag ctt gaa atg atg agg gag att cac cag gag gct atg atc agt att Ile Ser Ile Als Ser Ile Glu Thr Phe Lys Leu Glu Met Met Ser Ala Glu Ala Met Ile Ser Ile Gln Ser Arg Ile Asp Ala Leu Arg Gln Glu Asn Glu Glu Leu Lys Asn Asn Ash Ala Asn Gly Gln 450 cttattgccc ttegecttt atttagettt aatctecta atactatgac ccatctacat agctectcta gacagattgc gaactgtgtg aatctetgt gtaacatagg ataaaacgga 1581	gcc Ala	Ala	gcc Ala	acc Thr	aac Asn	act Thr	Ala	atc Ile	tct Ser	gca Ala	ttg Leu	Leu	gag Glu	ttc Phe	tca Ser	ctc Leu	116	57
Aag aac aat gct aat gga caa taa aggetetaaa aacatetete caggttactt Lys Asn Asn Ala Asp Ala Leu Arg Gln Glu Arg 410 1311	Met	ggt Gly	atc Ile	tcc Ser	gac Asp	Lys	aaa Lys	gaa Glu	aag Lys	ccg Pro	GIn	caa Gln	ccg Pro	cta Leu	cgt Arg	Pro	121	15
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Asn Glu Pro Pro Arg Glu Thr Ala Pro Leu Asp Ile Glu Ser Asp Gln
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Gln Asn His His Glu Asn Asp Leu Lys Pro Glu Glu His Asn Asn Asn 260 265 270

Asn Asn Tyr Asp Glu Asn Glu Glu Thr Leu Lys Arg Glu Gln Met Glu 275 280 285

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									, eque					•		
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Thr Gly Ala Gly Gly Thr Leu Glu Ser Ile Val Asp Gln Ala Thr Arg 65 70 80

Leu Pro Asn Pro Lys Pro Thr Asp Glu Leu Val Pro Trp Phe His His 90 95

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Asn Leu Val His Glu Gln Gln Ser Lys Pro Gly Gly Val Gly Ser Thr 115 120 125

Arg Val Gly Ser Cys Ser Asp Gly Arg Thr Met Gly Gly Gly Lys Arg 130 140

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Gln Pro Arg Arg Arg His Tyr Arg Gly Val Arg Gln Arg Pro Trp Gly Page 23

35

Lys Trp Ala Ala Glu Ile Arg Asp Pro Lys Lys Ala Ala Arg Val Trp

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Page 24

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Arg Asn Phe Ser Ser Ala Leu Leu Asp Arg Cys Tyr Asp Pro Ser Ser 195 200 205

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Ile Pro Val Cys Gln Ala Leu Asp Ile Glu Ile Pro Pro Pro Arg Pro 85 90 95

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Pro Ala Ser Ser Asp Asp Ser Asp Glu Thr Gly Val Thr Lys Leu

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MBI-17 Sequence Listing.ST25

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Lys Met Arg Asp Asn Asn Ser Asn Asn Asn Ala Thr Thr Asp Ser Trp 520

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Page 48

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MBI-17 Sequence Listing.ST25

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Ile Lys Arg Gly Asn Ile Thr Pro Glu Glu Glu Asp Val Ile Val Lys 70

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Pro Gly Arg Thr Asp Asn Glu Ile Lys Asn Tyr Trp Asn Ser His Leu

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Val Glu Asn Ala Pro Pro Pro Pro Lys Arg Pro Gly Arg Thr Ser

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	cac His 230															7	77
	caa Gln															8:	25
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Cys Gly Lys Ser Cys Arg Leu Arg Trp Met Asn Tyr Leu Lys Pro Asp 50 Page 54

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Pro																474
atg Met																522
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Pro Ile Gly Ser His Arg Met Asn Ser Leu Val Asn Asn Gln Ala Thr

Lys Ser Ala Arg Glu Glu Glu Glu Ala Gly Lys Lys Val Lys Asp

Asp Glu Pro Lys Asp Val Thr Lys Lys Val Asn Gly Lys Val Gln Val

Gly Phe Ile Lys Val Asn Met Asp Gly Val Ala Ile Gly Arg Lys Val

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85

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Gln	Gly	Phe 115	Val	Tyr	Gly	Ile	Ile 120	Pro	Glu	Asn	Gly	Lys 125	Pro	Val	Thr	
Gly	Ala 130	Ser	Asp	Asn	Leu	Arg 135	Glu	Trp	Trp	Lys	Asp 140	Lys	Val	Arg	Phe	
Asp 145	Arg	Asn	Gly	Pro	Ala 150	Ala	Ile	Thr	Lys	Tyr 155	Gln	Ala	Glu	Asn	Asn 160	
Ile	Pro	Gly	Ile	His 165	Glu	Gly	Asn	Asn	Pro 170	Ile	Gly	Pro	Thr	Pro 175	His	

MBI-17 Sequence Listing.ST25
Thr Leu Gln Glu Leu Gln Asp Thr Thr Leu Gly Ser Leu Leu Ser Ala
180 185 190

Leu Met Gln His Cys Asp Pro Pro Gln Arg Arg Phe Pro Leu Glu Lys 195 200 205

Gly Val Pro Pro Pro Trp Trp Pro Asn Gly Lys Glu Asp Trp Trp Pro 210 220

Gln Leu Gly Leu Pro Lys Asp Gln Gly Pro Ala Pro Tyr Lys Lys Pro 225 230 235 240

His Asp Leu Lys Lys Ala Trp Lys Val Gly Val Leu Thr Ala Val Ile 245 250 255

Lys His Met Phe Pro Asp Ile Ala Lys Ile Arg Lys Leu Val Arg Gln 260 265 270

Ser Lys Cys Leu Gln Asp Lys Met Thr Ala Lys Glu Ser Ala Thr Trp 275 280 285

Leu Ala Ile Ile Asn Gln Glu Glu Ser Leu Ala Arg Glu Leu Tyr Pro 290 295 300

Glu Ser Cys Pro Pro Leu Ser Leu Ser Gly Gly Ser Cys Ser Leu Leu 305 310 310 320

Met Asn Asp Cys Ser Gln Tyr Asp Val Glu Gly Phe Glu Lys Glu Ser 325 330 335

His Tyr Glu Val Glu Glu Leu Lys Pro Glu Lys Val Met Asn Ser Ser 340 345 350

Asn Phe Gly Met Val Ala Lys Met His Asp Phe Pro Val Lys Glu Glu 355 360 365

Val Pro Ala Gly Asn Ser Glu Phe Met Arg Lys Arg Lys Pro Asn Arg 370 375 380

Asp Leu Asn Thr Ile Met Asp Arg Thr Val Phe Thr Cys Glu Asn Leu 385 390 395 400

Gly Cys Ala His Ser Glu Ile Ser Arg Gly Phe Leu Asp Arg Asn Ser 405 410 415

Arg Asp Asn His Gln Leu Ala Cys Pro His Arg Asp Ser Arg Leu Pro 420 425 430

Tyr Gly Ala Ala Pro Ser Arg Phe His Val Asn Glu Val Lys Pro Val 435 440 445

Val Gly Phe Pro Gln Pro Arg Pro Val Asn Ser Val Ala Gln Pro Ile 450 455 460

Asp Leu Thr Gly Ile Val Pro Glu Asp Gly Gln Lys Met Ile Ser Glu 465 470 475 480

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96

MBI-17 Sequence Listing.ST25

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Val Met Glu Asn Gln Ser Val Ser Leu Leu Gln Pro Thr Val His Asn 505

His Gln Glu His Leu Gln Phe Pro Gly Asn Met Val Glu Gly Ser Phe . 520

Phe Glu Asp Leu Asn Ile Pro Asn Arg Ala Asn Asn Asn Asn Ser Ser 535

Asn Asn Gln Thr Phe Phe Gln Gly Asn Asn Asn Asn Asn Asn Val Phe

Lys Phe Asp Thr Ala Asp His Asn Asn Phe Glu Ala Ala His Asn Asn 565 570

Asn Asn Asn Ser Ser Gly Asn Arg Phe Gln Leu Val Phe Asp Ser Thr 585

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ggt tat ggt aac tgg aga acc ctc ccc aaa aat gcc ggt acg tgt ttg Gly Tyr Gly Asn Trp Arg Thr Leu Pro Lys Asn Ala Gly Thr Cys Leu 144 40

caa aga tgt ggc aaa agt tgt agg tta agg tgg act aat tat ctc cga Gln Arg Cys Gly Lys Ser Cys Arg Leu Arg Trp Thr Asn Tyr Leu Arg 192

240 cca gat ata aaa cga gga aga ttc tct ttt gag gaa gaa gaa gcc att Pro Asp Ile Lys Arg Gly Arg Phe Ser Phe Glu Glu Glu Glu Ala Ile 65 70 75 80

att cag ctt cat agc ttc tta gga aac aag tgg tct gcg att gcg gcg 288 Ile Gln Leu His Ser Phe Leu Gly Asn Lys Trp Ser Ala Ile Ala Ala

Page 72

•				85	:	•	MBI	-17 5	Seque 90	ence	List	ing	.ST2	95			
cgt Arg	ttg Leu	cca Pro	gga Gly 100	aga Arg	aca Thr	gat Asp	aat Asn	gag Glu 105	atc	aag Lys	aac Asn	ttt Phe	tgg Trp 110	aac Asn	act Thr		336
cat	ata Ile	aga Arg 115	aag Lys	aag Lys	cta Leu	ctt Leu	aga Arg 120	atg Met	999 Gly	att	gat Asp	cca Pro 125	gtg Val	act Thr	cac His		384
agt Ser	cca Pro 130	cga Arg	ctc Leu	gat Asp	ctc	ctc Leu 135	gat Asp	atc Ile	tca Ser	tcc Ser	atc Ile 140	tta Leu	gct Ala	tca Ser	tct Ser	:	432
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Asp	Thr	Asn	Arg	Arg 165	cat His	Gln	Gln	Gln	His 170	Pro	Leu	Val	Asn	Pro 175	Glu		528
Ile	Leu	Lys	Leu 180	Ala	acc Thr	Ser	Ile	Phe 185	Ser	Gln	Asn	Gln	Asn 190	Gln	Asn		576
His	Asn	Gln 195	Asn	Gln	aac Asn	Gln	Asn 200	Gln	Asn	Leu	Val	Val 205	Asp	His	Glu		624
Lys	Gln 210	Thr	Val	Tyr	cat His	His 215	His	Asp	Val	Asn	Gln 220	Thr	Gly	Val	Asn		672
Gln 225	Tyr	Gln	Thr	Asp	Gln 230	Tyr	Phe	Glu	Asn	Ala 235	Ile	Thr	Gln	Glu	240		720
Gln	Ser	Ser	Met	Pro 245	cca Pro	Phe	Pro	Asn	Glu 250	Ala	His	Gln	Phe	Asn 255	Asp		768
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Ser	Thr	Thr 275	Ser	Val	caa Gln	Asp	Cys 280	Tyr	Asn	Pro	Ser	Phe 285	Asn	Asp	Tyr		864
Ser	Ser 290	Ser	Asn	Phe	gtc Val	Leu 295	Asp	His	Ser	Tyr	Ser 300	Asp	Gln	Ser	Phe		912
Asn 305	Phe	Ala	Asn	Ser	gtc Val 310	Leu	Asn	Thr	Pro	Ser 315	Ser	Ser	Pro	Ser	320		960
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Asp	Glu	Ile	Glu 340	Ser	tat Tyr	Cys	Ser	Asn 345	Leu	Met	aag Lys	ttt Phe	gat Asp 350	att Ile	Pro		1056
gat Asp	ttc Phe	ttg Leu 355	gac Asp	gtt Val	aat Asn	ggt Gly	ttt Phe 360	att Ile	ata Ile	taa			٠			3	1089

³⁶² PRT Arabidopsis thaliana

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Trp Thr Ser Glu Glu Asp Gln Lys Leu Val Asp Tyr Ile Gln Lys His
20 25 30

Gly Tyr Gly Asn Trp Arg Thr Leu Pro Lys Asn Ala Gly Thr Cys Leu 35 40 45

Gln Arg Cys Gly Lys Ser Cys Arg Leu Arg Trp Thr Asn Tyr Leu Arg 50 55 60

Pro Asp Ile Lys Arg Gly Arg Phe Ser Phe Glu Glu Glu Glu Ala Ile 65 70 75 80

Ile Gln Leu His Ser Phe Leu Gly Asn Lys Trp Ser Ala Ile Ala Ala 85 90 95

Arg Leu Pro Gly Arg Thr Asp Asn Glu Ile Lys Asn Phe Trp Asn Thr

His Ile Arg Lys Lys Leu Leu Arg Met Gly Ile Asp Pro Val Thr His

Ser Pro Arg Leu Asp Leu Leu Asp Ile Ser Ser Ile Leu Ala Ser Ser 130 140

Leu Tyr Asn Ser Ser Ser His His Met Asn Met Ser Arg Leu Met Met 145 150 155

Asp Thr Asn Arg Arg His Gln Gln His Pro Leu Val Asn Pro Glu 165 170 175

Ile Leu Lys Leu Ala Thr Ser Ile Phe Ser Gln Asn Gln Asn 180 185 190

His Asn Gln Asn Gln Asn Gln Asn Gln Asn Leu Val Val Asp His Glu 195 200 205

Lys Gln Thr Val Tyr His His Asp Val Asn Gln Thr Gly Val Asn

Gln Tyr Gln Thr Asp Gln Tyr Phe Glu Asn Ala Ile Thr Gln Glu Leu 225 230 235 240

Gln Ser Ser Met Pro Pro Phe Pro Asn Glu Ala His Gln Phe Asn Asp

Met Asp His His Phe Asn Gly Phe Gly Glu Gln Asn Leu Val Ser Thr 260 265 270

Ser Thr Thr Ser Val Gln Asp Cys Tyr Asn Pro Ser Phe Asn Asp Tyr 275 280 285 Ser Ser Ser Asn Phe Val Leu Asp His Ser Tyr Ser Asp Gln Ser Phe 290 295 300

Asn Phe Ala Asn Ser Val Leu Asn Thr Pro Ser Ser Ser Pro Ser Pro 305 310 315

Thr Thr Leu Asn Ser Ser Tyr Ile Asn Ser Ser Ser Cys Ser Thr Glu 325 330 335

Asp Glu Ile Glu Ser Tyr Cys Ser Asn Leu Met Lys Phe Asp Ile Pro 340 345 350

Asp Phe Leu Asp Val Asn Gly Phe Ile Ile 355 360

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Inter____at application No.

	<u> </u>	PCT/US00/314	57
IPC(7) US CL 320.3	: 435/468,419,320.1;530/300,326,327;536/23	; C12N 5/14, 15/11, 15/29, 15/82 .1,23.6;800/278,281,287,305-310,314,3	15,317.1-317.4,320.1-
B. FIE	ELDS SEARCHED		
Minimum o U.S. :	documentation searched (classification system follows 435/468,419,320.1;530/300,326,327;536/23.1,23.6;	ed by classification symbols) 800/278,281,287,305-310,314,315,317.	1-317.4,320.1-320.3
Documenta	tion searched other than minimum documentation to t	he extent that such documents are includ	ed in the fields searched
Electronic of EAST, STN	data base consulted during the international search (na N (Agricola, Biosis, Caplus, Embase), SEQ ID NO: 1	ame of data base and, where practicable, &2	search terms used)
	CUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT		
Category *			Relevant to claim No.
X Y	Ll, S.F. et al. A novel myb-related gene from Ara Vol. 379, pages 117-121, entire reference	S.F. et al. A novel myb-related gene from Arabidopsis thaliana. FEBS Letters 1996,	
			27
X 	circadian rhythms and the photoperiodic control of	HAFFER, R. et al. The late elongated hypocotyl mutation of Arabidopsis disrupts cadian rhythms and the photoperiodic control of flowering. Cell 1998, Vol. 93, pages	
Υ .	1219-1229.		27
Υ - '	Database NCBI Nucleotide, U.S. National Library of Medicine, (Bethesda, MD, USA), No. U28422, WANG, Z. Direct Submission, Sequence, January 14, 1997.		1-14 & 25-27
Y	S 5,939,601 (KLESSIG et al) 17 August 1999 (17.08.1999), entire reference.		1-14 & 25-27
Υ.	SUZUKI, A. et al. Cloning and expression of five myb-related genes from rice seed. Gene 1997, Vol. 198, pages 393-398.		1-14 & 25-27
Y,P	LOGUERCIO, L.L. et al. Differential regulation of six novel myb-domain genes defines ow distinct expression patterns in allotetraplid cotton (Goxxypium hirsutum L.), Mol. Gen. Genet. 1999, Vol. 261, pages 660-671.		1-14 & 25-27
Υ,Ρ	KIRIK, V. et al. Two novel myb homologues with changed expression in late embryogenesis-defective Arabidopsis mutants. Plant Mol. Biol. 1998, Vol. 37, pages 819-827.		1-14 & 25-27
	1		
Funthe	er documents are listed in the continuation of Box C.	See patent family annex.	
Special categories of cited documents: "A" document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be		later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention	
of particular relevance "E" earlier application or patent published on or after the international filing date		"X" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone "Y" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art	
'L" document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified)			
O document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means			
"P" document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed		"&" document member of the same patent family	
Date of the actual completion of the international search		Date of mailing of the international search report	
14 February 2001 (14.02.2001) Name and mailing address of the ISA/US		Authorized officer	
Name and mailing address of the ISA/US Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks Box PCT		David Kruse	00 1
Washington, D.C. 20231 Facsimite No. (703)305-3230		Telephone No. 703-308-0196	lanson
	A/210 (second sheet) (July 1998)	100-300-0190	/!

BNSDOCID: <WO____0135727A1_I_>

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Ints onal application No.

PCT/US00/31457

Box I Observations where certain claims were found unsearchable (Continuation of Item 1 of first sheet)			
This international report has not been established in respect of certain claims under Article 17(2)(a) for the following reasons:			
1. Claim Nos.:			
because they relate to subject matter not required to be searched by this Authority, namely:			
2. Claim Nos.:			
because they relate to parts of the international application that do not comply with the prescribed requirements to			
such an extent that no meaningful international search can be carried out, specifically:			
3. Claim Nos.:			
because they are dependent claims and are not drafted in accordance with the second and third sentences of Rule			
6.4(a).			
Box II Observations where unity of invention is lacking (Continuation of Item 2 of first sheet)			
201 2 Observations where they of the three in the state of the breety			
This International Searching Authority found multiple inventions in this international application, as follows:			
Please See Continuation Sheet			
As all required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant, this international search report covers all searchable claims.			
As all searchable claims could be searched without effort justifying an additional fee, this Authority did not invite payment of any additional fee.			
As only some of the required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant, this international search report covers only those claims for which fees were paid, specifically claims Nos.:			
K-7			
4. No required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant. Consequently, this international search report			
is restricted to the invention first mentioned in the claims; it is covered by claims Nos.: 1-14 &25-27:SEQ ID NOs:			
1&2			
Remark on Protest The additional search fees were accompanied by the applicant's protest.			
No protest accompanied the payment of additional search fees.			

Form PCT/ISA/210 (continuation of first sheet(1)) (July 1998)

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Int tonal application No.

PCT/US00/31457

BOX II. OBSERVATIONS WHERE UNITY OF INVENTION IS LACKING This application contains the following inventions or groups of inventions which are not so linked as to form a single general inventive concept under PCT Rule 13.1. In order for all inventions to be examined, the appropriate additional examination fees must be paid.

Groups I-XXVII, claim(s) 1-14 and 25-27, drawn to a transgenic plant having modified seed characteristics, polynucleotides and vectors for producing said transgenic plant and a method of making said transgenic plant. Applicant must elect one pair of sequences (one nucleic acid and the corresponding amino acid translation) to be examined, i.e. SEQ ID NO: 1 and 2 in Group I, SEQ ID NO: 3 and 4 in Group II, SEQ ID NO: 5 and 6 in Group III, etc.

Group XXVIII, claim(s) 15-17, drawn to a method of identifying a factor that is modulated.

Group XXIX, claims(s) 18, drawn to a method of identifying a molecule that modulates activity or expression of a polynucleotide or polypeptide.

Group XXX, claims(s) 19 and 20, drawn to an integrated computer system.

Group XXXI, claim(s) 21-24, drawn to a method for identifying a polynucleotide sequence comprising selecting a nucleic acid sequence from a database that meets a selected sequence criteria.

The inventions listed as Groups I-XXXI do not relate to a single general inventive concept under PCT Rule 13.1 because, under PCT Rule 13.2, they lack the same or corresponding special technical features for the following reasons:

The inventions listed as Groups I-XXXI do not relate to a single general inventive concept under PCT Rule 13.1 because, under PCT Rule 13.2, they lack the same or corresponding special technical features for the following reasons: Groups I-XXVII are drawn to a transgenic plant and a method of producing said plant with a nucleic acid sequence. The methods of Groups I-XXVII differ from each other in that they are directed to a plant transformation method and transgenic plant with a structurally and functionally distinct nucleic acid sequence which encodes a structurally and functionally distinct amino acid sequence. In addition, Groups XXVIII, XXIX and XXXI are different methods from any of Groups I-XXVII in that they have different method steps and different end products, and Group XXX requires a computer system. Thus, there is no single special technical feature, which links the inventions of Groups I-XXXI under PCT Rule 13.2.

Form PCT/ISA/210 (extra sheet) (July 1998)